

NOVEMBER 2016

FOUR SHIRES



CHRIS WHITE

A day in the
life of a
Four Shires' MP

FESTIVE SHOPPING

Gifts for everyone
in the *Four Shires*

RETRO GARAGE

Attendant service
and a slice of
cake in Weedon

CAPTURING MOVEMENT IN STEEL

Artist blacksmith
Kelly Burton

AVAILABLE IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, OXFORDSHIRE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE AND WARWICKSHIRE



HORTON
TREATMENT CENTRE



Are you sick and tired of waiting for your healthcare?

Horton Treatment Centre in Banbury offers a wide range of services for self-paying patients or those with private medical insurance:

- Hip and Knee Surgery
- Foot and Ankle Surgery
- Shoulder and Elbow Surgery
- Hand and Wrist Surgery
- Dermatology
- Cosmetic Surgery
- Ultrasound, X-ray, MRI and DEXA scans
- Pain Management
- Physiotherapy

Why wait?

Call Horton Treatment Centre today on 01295 755 074 to speak to Melissa, our Private Patient advisor, for fast access to our specialist Consultants.

01295 755 074

www.hortontreatmentcentre.co.uk

Oxford Road, Banbury OX16 9FG

@HortonTreatment

People caring for people



from THE EDITOR

Welcome to the November issue of *Four Shires* magazine. Our wonderful cover picture this month shows the glorious colours that adorn our trees at this time of year. It seems that over the past few years, warmer summers have led to much more vibrant foliage than previously. Take a day out and visit one of the arboretums in the area – they are sure to offer a spectacular display.

It was announced on the BBC today that Birmingham libraries in Sutton Coldfield and Aston are going to be closed because of lack of use. The council involved could no longer justify the upkeep and the outgoings... This is sad.

Four Shires magazine is produced in buildings next door to the public library in Banbury and for the last 20 years or so that has been under constant threat of closure. Luckily, Oxfordshire County Council has come up with numerous ideas that have kept the lovely old building open. There is now a floor dedicated to computer 'interweb' usage (oddly enough, one of the reasons libraries are now used less and less), there has been a super DVD and music section there for years and you can pick up the daily newspaper as well.

Perhaps, as in some city centre bookshops, the library should have a café and a place to sit and chat and delve into a good book.

I don't know about you, but it seems to me that there are fewer and fewer people getting involved in the strange social activity that is: 'talking to one another'! Everyone seems to be addicted to their 'iPhone', 'Blackberry', 'Samsung fire starter' or 'Nokia'. I have to admit that I have used my device to check sporting events quite regularly – but it seems that their use has become endemic.

Closing the very few establishments where there's a chance that people could interact with one another without an electronic crutch seems to me to be a great mistake.

JEREMY WILTON



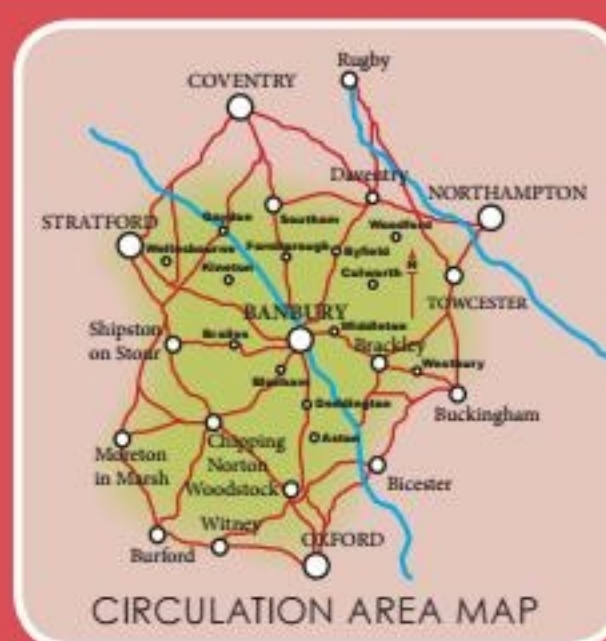
FOUR SHIRES MAGAZINE

NEVER MISS AN ISSUE!

Subscribe to *The Four Shires* today and receive the magazine direct to your door every month. Never again will you miss our popular Pictures from the Past or miss local events listed in our Out and About section. Just £36 for 12 issues, or £20 for 6 issues. Contact orders@fourshires.co.uk to find out more.

The Four Shires Magazine. All rights reserved. Reproduction or transmission in whole or in part without written permission is strictly prohibited. The Four Shires magazine welcomes unsolicited manuscripts and photographs and every effort will be made to return them safely, although this cannot be fully guaranteed. The views of the contributors are not necessarily those of the publishers.

ISSN 1473-0472



**The Four Shires
Borough House
Marlborough Road
Banbury, Oxfordshire
OX16 5TH**

Tel: 01295 273138

**Advertising:
01295 709999**

**www.fourshires.co.uk
copy@fourshires.co.uk**



WATERMANS GOLDSMITHS



Manufacturers & designers of bespoke jewellery
Jewellery re-modelling • Repairs and restoration • Watch servicing & repairs • Pearl & bead restringing • Hand engraving • Valuations for insurance & probate • Diamond & Gemstone dealers • Same day repairs & rhodium plating available • Gold, silver & unwanted jewellery bought or part exchanged

50 Parsons Street, Banbury, OX16 5NB. Tel 01295 269210
www.watermansgoldsmiths.co.uk

meet the FOUR SHIRES' TEAM



JEREMY WILTON
Editor

A fully signed up member of Her Majesty's press corps, he's been working in journalism since 1982. He is fully committed to making *Four Shires* the wonderful publication it is.

01295 709999 copy@fourshires.co.uk



CATHY BLACK
Editorial and Social Media

She's such a happy, bouncy girl! Cathy is full of bright ideas and they all go into each publication. Nothing is ever too much trouble for Cathy, she is an actual miracle.

01295 273138 cathy@fourshires.co.uk



CAROLINE JAUQUES
Design Manager

Caroline is the actual juggler, she is the one that makes the pages happen. This is the lady who designs our colourful and vibrant mag every month - we hope you love it!

01295 258570 fourshires@media-tribe.com



BRUCE COX

Our fabulous theatre reporter, Bruce, is always out and about finding the best of entertainment. You'll also see him at many car events.



GEORGE FENEMORE

George has a wonderfully rustic outlook on life, his observations of town and country are always thought provoking.



MAGGIE CHAPLIN

Maggie always has a surprise subject up her sleeve and delivers interesting editorial each month!



KATE WILTON
Accounts and Subscriptions

Kate looks after everyone and everything. Without Kate we would all fall apart and the magazine would cease to exist. She keeps everything running super-smoothly.

01295 273138 kate@fourshires.co.uk



GAIL SEWARD
Advertising Executive

Gail carries the hearts of our advertisers around in her handbag - they are never far from her thoughts. She is the cause of all juggling here - life with Gail changes hourly!

01295 709999 gail@fourshires.co.uk



CHRISTINE BRIDGER

Holiday books, books as gifts or simply something for yourself, Christine gives us a monthly rundown of the best there is.



BARRY WHITEHOUSE

Everything you ever need to know about art comes from Barry and every month he delights us with another lesson.



DAVID WILLIAMS

And round the end of the cucumber frame, who should you meet but... David Williams! Don't go in the garden without his words of advice.



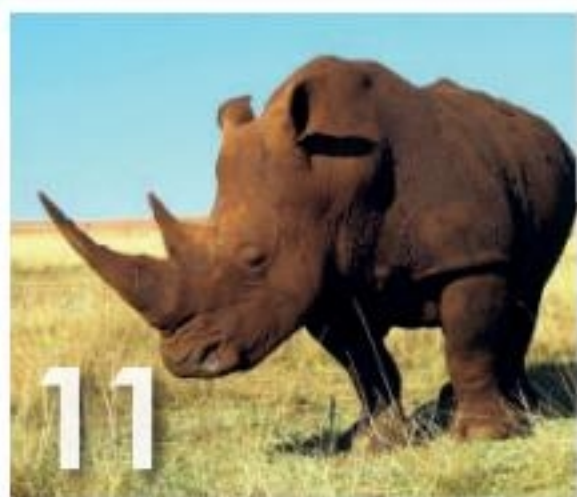
LIZ DRAKE
Photographer

Liz is a freelance photographer based in Warwick and provides great images that are featured throughout our magazine.



Hatton Country World

Festive Shopping will be a great event this year as we have some of the best local shops right here in the Four Shires. From fashion to homes, gifts for him and for her, surprises for the children and a few little extras, we've got some top tips for where to go, including Christmas markets galore.



11

7 YOUR LETTERS
Four Shires' readers' thoughts.

8 AROUND THE SHIRES
Lots of local news from the Four Shires.

11 BOOKS
Our best monthly reads.

14 OUT & ABOUT
Where to go and what to see in the Four Shires this month.

20 ARTS & ANTIQUES
The darker side of art with Barry Whitehouse and a groundbreaking new MMO game.

30 FESTIVE SHOPPING
Christmas is coming - take a look at our festive shopping guide.

42 MOVEMENT IN STEEL
Artist blacksmith Kelly Burton's beautiful sculptures.



42



46

46 ATTENDANT SERVICE AND A SLICE OF CAKE!

A treasure trove of retro automobilia in Weedon.

50 HOMES & INTERIORS
House moving tips and autumn colours for the home.



62

62 GARDENS & COUNTRY
Time to prepare your November garden and Countryman tackles some vital repairs.

68 LOOKING BACK
Pictures from the past - who do you know?



73

70 FROM HALLOWEEN TO HOGWARTS
Maggie Chaplin looks at the giant winter squash.

73 FOOD & DRINK
Winter warmers for chilly nights.



82

82 A DAY IN THE LIFE
MP Chris White discusses a normal day.

86 MOTORING
Bruce Cox enjoys a road trip with Alfred Hitchcock.

89 EDUCATION AND BUSINESS
School news and business successes in the Four Shires.



86

98 ENTERTAINMENT
Guitarist Mark Hussey produces a concerto in Banbury.

A GIFT THAT LASTS ALL YEAR SUBSCRIBE TO FOUR SHIRES NOW

at www.fourshires.co.uk or by post

SUBSCRIBE BY POST OR ONLINE

To subscribe by post, please complete this form and return it to:

Four Shires Magazine
Borough House, Marlborough Road
Banbury, Oxfordshire OX16 5TH

I would like to subscribe to Four Shires...

**THE
PERFECT
CHRISTMAS
GIFT!**

For myself ☐

As a gift ☐

For 6 months £20 ☐

For 12 months £36 ☐

Please start my subscription with the
..... issue

Name.....

Address.....

.....Tel:.....

I enclose a cheque made payable to

Four Shires Ltd for £.....

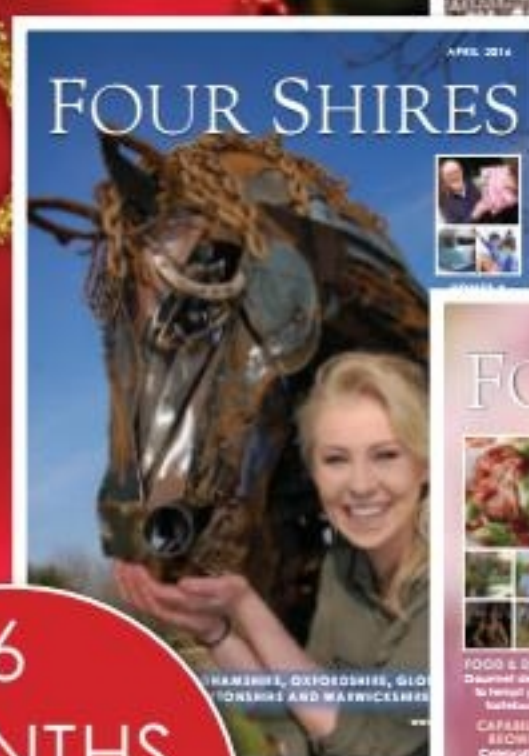
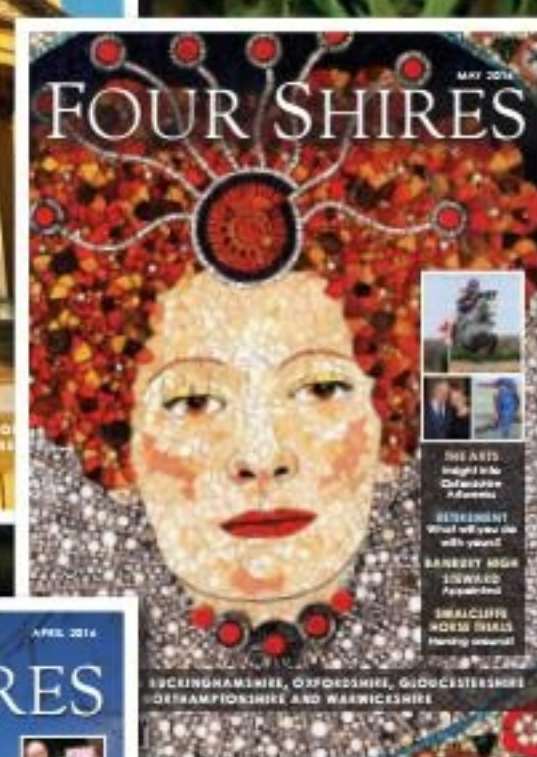
Gift recipient details (if applicable)

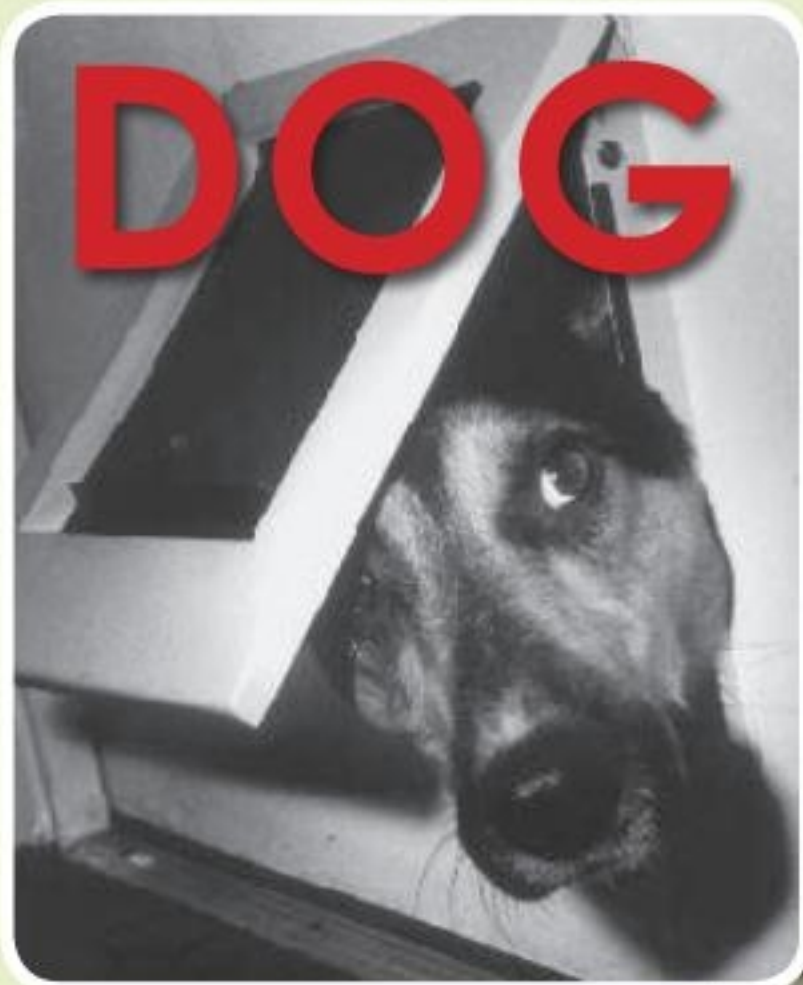
Name.....

Address.....

12
MONTHS
FOR ONLY
£36

6
MONTHS
FOR ONLY
£20





DOG GETS BONE

Dog is an admirer of all those who value hope over experience and this little terrier Guinness seems to be about to tackle something much bigger than he should really be able to tackle!

This fabulous picture was taken by Four Shires favourite photographer, Harry Rhodes. It features Head Lass at Ben Case racings Vicky Brown's terrier Guinness about to tackle a massive bone.



MONSTER MUNCH

This monster crane (pictured left) has been munching its way through the old Castle Street multi-story car park recently.

It is easy to see where the film makers get their inspiration for the city crushing robots.

LINKING ARMS WITH RESCUED KIDS

**To all at Four Shires
Re: your donation to
charity auction held in
September**

Thank you so much for supporting this event so generously with your gift. You will be delighted to learn that the total we raised was just over £1,750. This will go to our general funds from which we send £3000 every other month to the rescue Centre to pay for staffing and some food. We send additional monies at Christmas for a present for each child, school fees and other items for use by any of the children. And we have direct contact with the manager of the centre so we know where the monies go.

Just as an example £350 pays for school fees for a high school student for one year; £25 will support a child in the Centre for a month, £3.50 pays for shoes, £5.50 for jeans and an average of £50 buys a bicycle to enable the children to cycle to school. So your contribution has really made a difference to these kids who are either orphaned or who are unable to return home because of abuse.

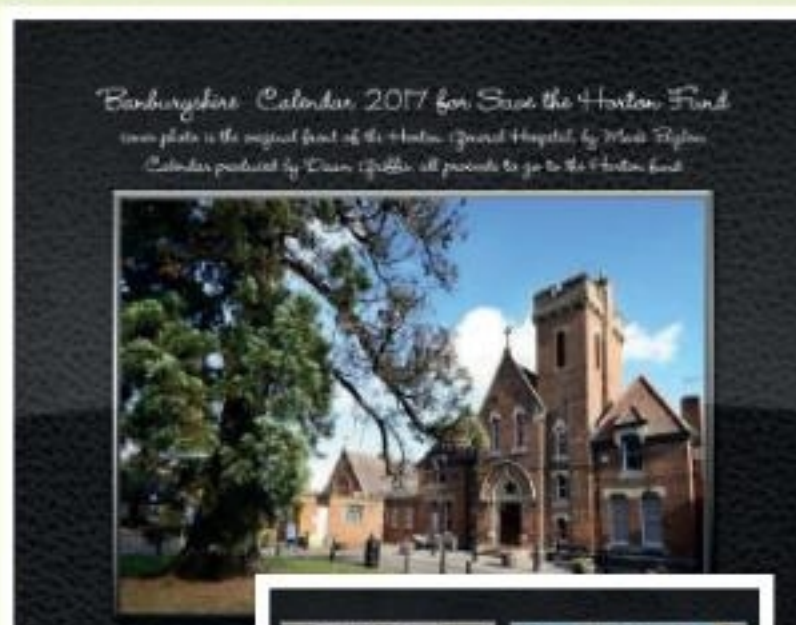
**Again Thank you.
Dr Ruth Campion (Chair of Lark)**

CALENDAR RELEASED TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE 'SAVE OUR HORTON' CAMPAIGN

Dawn Griffis, Who is an ex nurse of the now under threat Horton Hospital has released a 2017 calendar, with all funds raised being donated to the 'Save our Horton Campaign'.

The Four Shires were pleased to help with this calendar and supplied Dawn with a picture that features as the month of April. Dawn is a long term subscriber to the magazine who now lives in Australia but still receives our magazine each month to keep up to date with what is going on in the area.

If you would like to support a great local cause then you can do so by purchasing this calendar at <http://bit.ly/2d2rVgx> The calendar is priced at £10.75 ex vat and all proceeds will be given to the 'Save the Horton fund'





BRITISH WOOL COLLECTIVE

Alex James and Caroline Rush have opened the first British wool collective boutique. Launched at Bicester last month, the boutique is a



collaboration with the Campaign for Wool's 'Wool Week', which is a HRH Prince of Wales supported charity. The shop was opened by *Four Shires'* own musician Alex James and Caroline Rush (pictured left). The boutique showcases some of the best British talent in knitwear from brands such as Pringle of Scotland to Crumpet and Markus Lupfer.

GEORGE AND DRAGON, CHACOMBE, HOSTS CHARITY AUCTION

Chris Peverell, Thomas Peverell and Jamie O'dwyer are embarking on a cycle challenge from Lands end to John O' Groats in just nine days to raise money for cancer research uk. That's 969 miles in just over a week! To help them hit their fundraising target of £6,000 they are holding a charity auction at the George & Dragon in Chacombe on Saturday 26th November. The black tie auction starts at 7pm with live music from 10pm, with canapes and cocktails. Here are just some of the things up for grabs:



- Pair of Tickets to Biffy Clyro concert in Birmingham
- Pair of tickets to England v Italy at Twickenham
- Pair of Tickets to England v Lithuania

at Wembley ● VIP Hospitality Box for 2 people at Northampton Saints rugby match ● Classic car outing with dinner for two at The George & Dragon ● Pair of tickets to see Leicester Tigers v Northampton Saints ● 1 Night in a glamping pod on Anglesey (inc breakfast) ● 1 hour in a formula 1 simulator ● Brand new bass guitar.

BABY LOSS TREE

A ribbon tree for babies who didn't get the chance to live has been planted in People's Park, Banbury.

The tree, a silver birch, will be a living memorial for babies who died during pregnancy, at birth, or soon after birth. Grieving parents and relatives will be able to hang ribbons from the tree in memory of their lost babies.

The planting, organised by the Save the Horton Action Group and supported by Banbury Town Council and Oxfordshire Sands (the stillbirth and neonatal death charity), coincided with Lost Baby Awareness



Week – a national event held every October backed by more than 20 pregnancy and baby loss charities in the UK.

The tree was donated by Nicholson's Nurseries.

pictured: Karen Hancox of Sands (left) and MP Victoria Prentis plan the ribbon tree in People's Park

LITERARY LIVE COMES TO BANBURY

Banbury Literary Live will be coming to North Oxfordshire Academy this month. The event is the perfect family day out for those who love the written word.

On the 19th November there will be a special pre-event evening with 'Shakespeare Diva' Alycia Smith-Howard visiting the Academy. This will be followed on the 20th November by the main event, Banbury Literary Live. See page 16 for full details. www.literarylives.co.uk





CHRISTINE'S CHARITY HEAD SHAVE

Christine Dudfield of Cherington volunteered to have her head shaved to raise funds for Shipston Home Nursing last month.

The Charity was instrumental in the care for Christine's sister-in-law Rita and she wanted to give something back.

"Shipston Home Nurses were so good to my sister-in-law Rita. They showed so much care and compassion. I wanted to raise a substantial amount of money to thank them for what they did."

With friends and family looking on, her daughter Lois, who is a hairdresser, did a great job!

Christine has raised a fantastic £3,000 so far. You can still donate to her fundraising page www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Christine-Dudfield1



ACE OF TRUMPS

A bridge event was held at Thenford Village Barn last month, by kind permission of Lord Heseltine. The event, organised by Strutt and Parker, was held in aid of Cancer Research and the Sebastian Coe Charitable Foundation.

Teams of four battled it out and a raffle prize was awarded by 'Bridge in the Box'.

1: the bridge ladies enjoying their game ; 2: Amanda Assheton, Toby Harris & Karen Harris; 3: Angel Collins, Rachel Halvorson, Carole Sweetnam, Amanda Assheton; 4: Jane Rickman of JJ Catering; 5: Sophie Madden, Squeazy Doherty, Carolyn James, Victoria Pougatch



SEARCHLIGHT OF SUPPORT

A new charity *joss searchlight* in Witney town centre (registered charity no. 1141704) was established following the death of the founders' 10 year old son, Joss, to a cruel brain tumour.

The charity was set up to relieve the needs of children suffering from cancer through the provision of a co-ordinated support service. The charity offers the children and their families emotional and practical support via a helpline, support meetings and via an online support group.

The charity has also just been awarded funds to offer respite breaks and group holidays.

If you or someone you know is affected by childhood cancer please do get in touch. www.josssearchlight.org.uk



AROUND THE SHIRES



SIBFORD SCHOOL CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Sibford School, Sibford Ferris, Banbury OX15 5QL, Friday 2 December, 2pm and 5.30pm

Celebrate the start of the Christmas season in style by visiting Sibford School's annual festive fayre. Organised by parents of pupils at the school, the fayre will feature a host of art, craft, and food stalls offering goodies including hand-finished cushions, ceramics, kitchen gadgets, chopping boards, lunch boxes, cards, decorations, hair slides, jewellery and clothing. For the younger visitors there will be pocket money toys, games and, of course, the chance to visit Santa. You will also be able to place orders for real Christmas trees.

£2 entry includes a hot drink and a mince pie.

WARWICK WORDS HISTORY FESTIVAL SUCCESS

Warwick Words first ever History Festival has gone down in the town's records as a great success!

The History Festival marked a new departure for Warwick Words and it turned out to be very popular. The focus was on history and historical writing – fact and fiction, national and local – and the festival saw a number of sell-out events.

On the back of this success a new series of 'Warwick Words Tea Time Talks' in association with the University of Warwick has been launched and will run throughout the year.

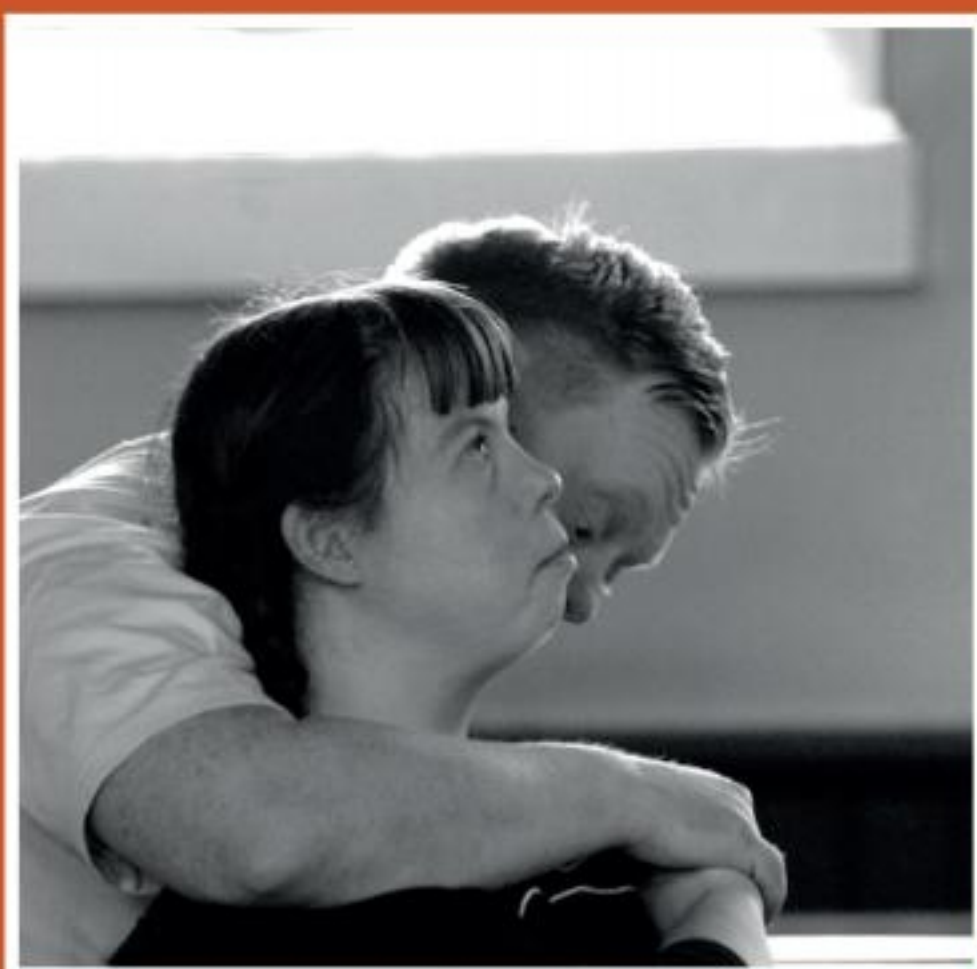
For the full programme of events visit the website at: www.warwickwords.co.uk



RUTTING DEER STRAY ONTO ROADS

Highways England and The Deer Initiative have joined forces to warn motorists about the heightened risk of collisions involving deer at this time of year. Across the UK it is estimated that there could be up to 74,000 deer related motor vehicle accidents.

October through to December is considered the high risk period as deer will be on the move for the rut. Highways England's advice is: when you see deer warning signs or are travelling through a heavily wooded or forested stretch of road, check your speed and stay alert.



ANJALI DANCE COMPANY

Banbury-based Anjali Dance Company has been awarded Arts Council Funding to support the training of learning-disabled dancers who will deliver dance workshops in schools and community settings in preparation for a national performance tour next year.

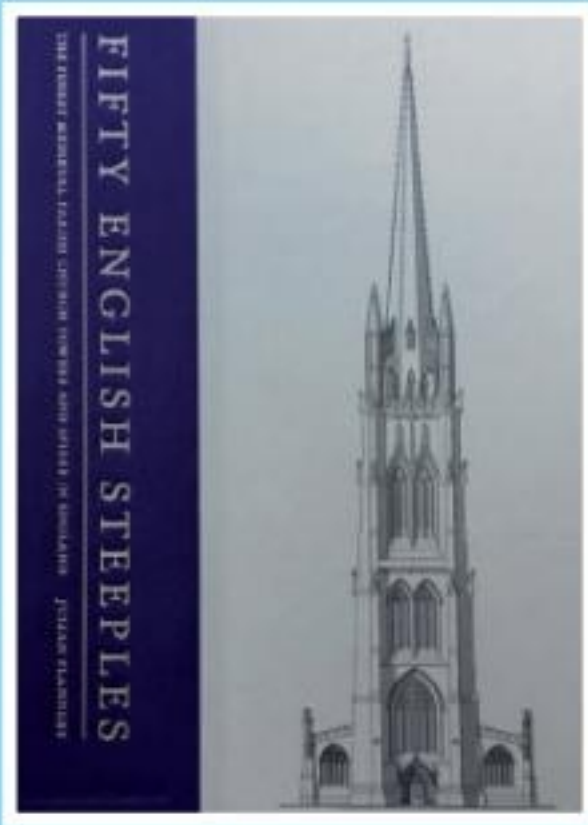
Anjali dancer and education leader Daisy Garrett said: "It's a great opportunity for us and we are looking forward to developing our

skills and working with new dance artists and teaching more workshops. We want to show everyone what we can do."

From Spring 2017 Anjali Dance Company will be undertaking a national tour of a new show, *Genius*, which has been made in collaboration with renowned choreographers Gary Clarke and Lea Anderson. *Genius* will be premiered at The Mill Arts Centre in Banbury in June 2017.



Books FOR YOUR BOOKSHELVES



50 ENGLISH STEEPLES: The Finest Medieval Church Towers and Spires in England

After five years of detailed research, Julian Flannery presents the first systematic survey of the 50 most important spires and church towers in England. He covers the aesthetic, technological and the architectural developments of the time. Illustrated with photographs and explanatory line drawings. £50



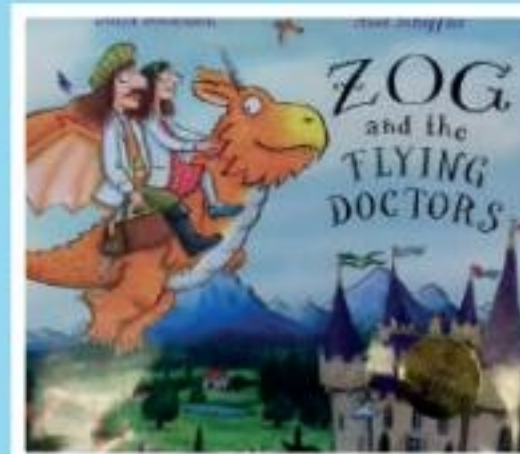
A SEA VOYAGE Gerard lo Monaco

A Sea Voyage by Gerard lo Monaco is a 'pop up' book about different types of ships and painted with a nod to the style of marine artist Paul-Emile Pajot. Very charming and retro in flavour this is a book that a child from about 6 years old would enjoy as would any adult. £18.95

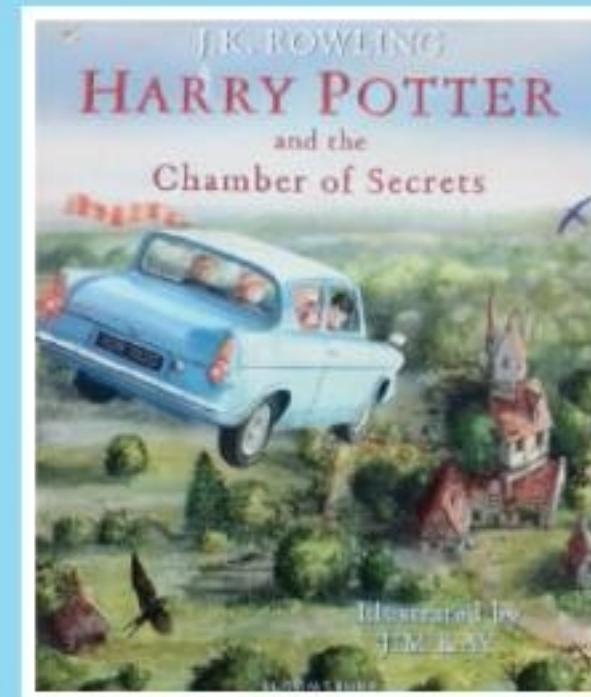
ZOG AND THE FLYING DOCTORS

Julia Donaldson

Zog and the Flying Doctors by Julia Donaldson and illustrated by Axel Scheffler is a delightful story about a



dragon, a knight and a girl. They are flying doctors ministering to anyone in need of their help, a mermaid with sunburn, a lion with a ghastly cold and lastly the King, who is initially resistant to their help as he doesn't believe that a girl can be a doctor. She can you know. £12.99



HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets is just published in the large

format, wonderfully illustrated, edition by Jim Kay. As with the *Philosopher's Stone* last year this book will appeal to old fans of the stories as well as those coming to them for the first time.

Until Christmas you can buy it in the Old Hall Bookshop for £22.50 (rrp £30)

ISTANBUL CULT RECIPES

Istanbul Cult Recipes is part cookery book part travelogue and has recipes and photographs of Istanbul, mentions some of the young restaurateurs who have made an impact in the city and also devotes a section to home cooking. £20 (The two previous books in the series, equally lovely, are *New York* and *Venice*.)



KEEPING ON KEEPING ON

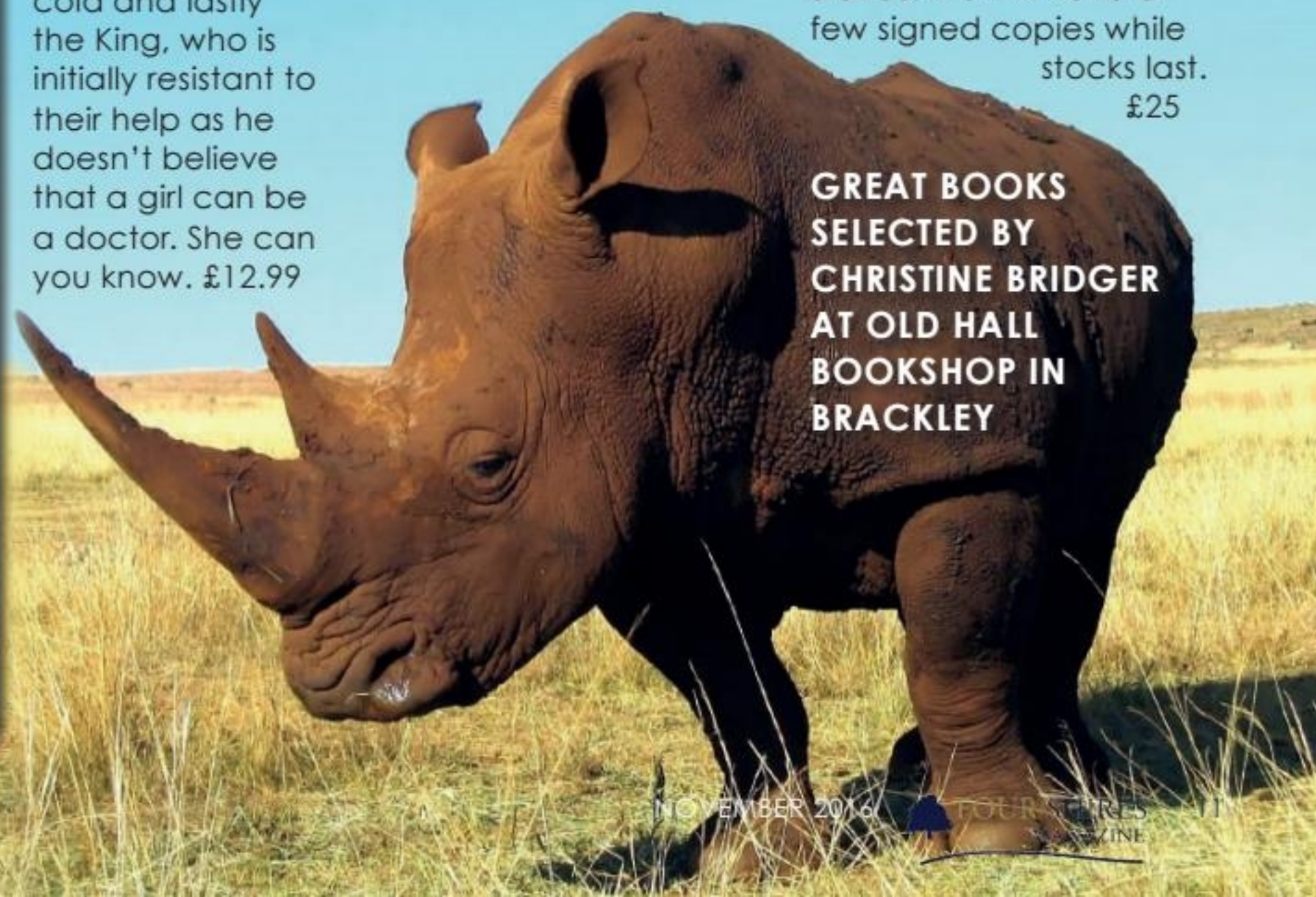
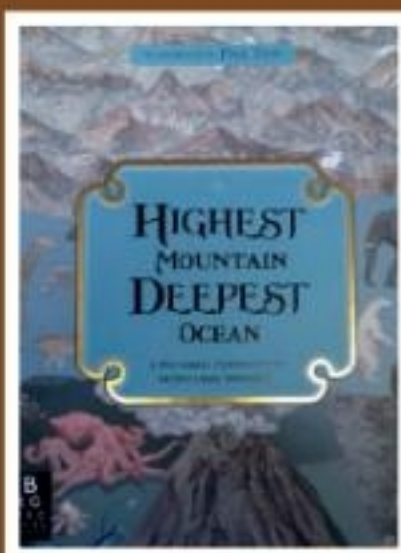
Alan Bennett

Keeping On Keeping On by Alan Bennett is his third collection of prose and diaries following on from *Writing Home* and *Untold Stories*. We will have a few signed copies while stocks last.

£25

HIGHEST MOUNTAIN DEEPEST OCEAN

Highest Mountain Deepest Ocean: A Pictorial Compendium of Natural Wonders is a book full of fascinating facts and accompanying illustrations, such as the heaviest animals on earth, the heaviest undersea creatures, the world's highest flying bird (Ruppels griffon vulture that flies just slightly higher than the cruising height of a commercial aircraft) the world's biggest storms and so much more. A brilliant book aimed at children from 7 years up but everyone will find something amazing in it. £14.99



**GREAT BOOKS
SELECTED BY
CHRISTINE BRIDGER
AT OLD HALL
BOOKSHOP IN
BRACKLEY**



WEDDING *in the* WILDERNESS

The Marriage of Sir James and Lady Clare Shuckburgh took place at the Church of Saint John The Baptist In The Wilderness on the Shuckburgh Estate. Friends and family were welcomed to a magnificent wedding breakfast followed by a disco and dancing into the early hours. The couple wowed guests by entering the marquee to a nine-gun salute! The day came to its climax with a fantastic firework display lighting up the deer park in front of the Hall.

The Shuckburgh family can trace their history back 900 years. They are Saxons who were already living in this country before William the Conqueror came from France and won the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

words & pics: jonathan wain

1: Ben Gower, Sir James & Tricky Crofts;
2: entering the Marquee to a 9 gun salute;
3: the wedding party; 4: the bride and groom, Sir James & Lady Clare;
5: the vicar Revd Bob Clucas; 6: the Groom's brother Pete Shuckburgh with partner Therese Penny and their son Daniel Shuckburgh; 7: Seb Clarke & Claire Wadland; 8: Polly & Stu Nichols; 9: Tim Perkin and Liz & Tim Higgs; 10: Shuckburgh Hall; 11: Just Married! Sir James & Lady Clare; 12: the Bride Clare Nichols and her father Ron Ambler; 13: Derren James, Jez Lucas, Will Nichols, Bruce Cook & Tree Thurston; 14: Claire Jones, Lizzy Crofts & Patrick White; 15: Emma Copeman with Julie & Simon Knott; 16: James & Kitty Patmore with Mark Higgs; 17: Mark the Hat and Caroline





10



11



12



13



14



15



16



17

OUT AND ABOUT



ICE WORLD

Waterways gallery, Banbury museum, Saturdays and school holidays until 28th January, 10.30am-12.30pm and 2pm-4pm

Wrap up nice and warm to explore the museum's magical ice world. What will you make? A polar bear hat, a perky penguin, a pop up ice world, a super sleigh. Don't forget your gloves and scarf. £2 per child, no need to book.

THE HISTORY OF THE WITNEY BLANKET INDUSTRY

The Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock OX20 1SN, 2nd November, 7:30pm-8:30pm (below left)

Learn about the History of the Witney blanket industry. Members free, guests £2.

VAN KUIJK STRING QUARTET

Royal Pump Rooms, Royal Leamington Spa, 4th November, 7.30pm

The French winners of the 2015 London International

String Quartet Competition come with a programme of French music. The quartet broadcast regularly on BBC Radio 3. From £13.

www.warwickdc.gov.uk



THE STRUGGLE FOR HEYFORD 1979-1986

Education studio, Banbury Museum, 5th November, 3pm

When in December 1979 NATO announced that it would be deploying US cruise missiles in six European countries, the USAF nuclear air base at Upper Heyford, suddenly seemed to be on the front-line. This talk will focus on this intense period in the second great phase of the Cold War and how we might interpret it through a local Oxfordshire photographer's lens. Mark Levene will be the speaker. £7.50.

www.banburymuseum.org



CHANGING FASHIONS IN SILVER

The Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock OX20 1SN, 5th November, 2.30pm-3.30pm

Michael Welch, senior valuer from Bonhams, will speak about the changing fashions in silverware design. Tickets are available beforehand at the museum reception and on the day, £8.



WARWICK CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

Market Place, Warwick, 6th November, 11am-5pm

Even more chocolate than last year, spread across the whole town, this is an event not to be missed! Think artisan chocolate, dipping chocolate, chocolate cake, and perhaps even chocolate beer! Admission free.



BLOCK PRINT SCARVES

Cotswold Discovery Centre at the Old Prison, Northleach GL54 3JH, 7th November, 7pm-9pm

Discover the ancient art of block printing using hand carved wooden blocks made in rural India by skilled artisans. Experiment with colours and designs on your sampler piece and move on to a scarf for either yourself or as a lovely gift. Suitable for beginners and improvers. £20.

OPUS ANGLICANUM AND THE STEEPLE ASTON COPE

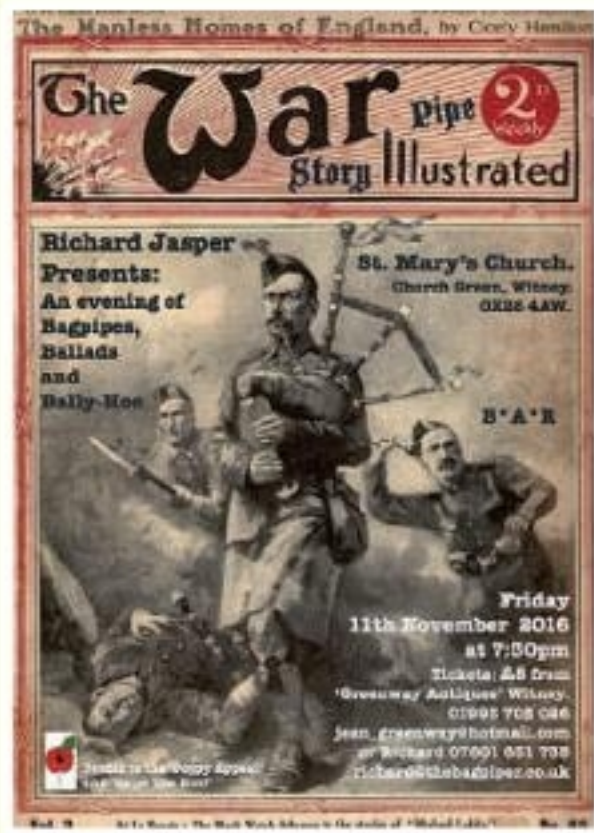
Education studio, Banbury museum, 10th November, 7.30pm

Banbury History Society lecture. This talk will include a brief introduction to





opus Anglicanum and medieval embroidered copes, before concentrating on speaker, Zoe Boden's research on the Steeple Aston cope. This cope, dating from the 13th century, is a unique and beautifully embroidered vestment which raises a number of intriguing and important questions. £3, no booking required.



BAGPIPES, BALLADS AND BALLY-HOO

**St. Mary's Church,
Witney OX28 4AW, 11th
November, 7:30pm**

A show of tunes and songs to highlight the trials, tribulations and duties of the piper through times of war and down the years. Richard Jasper is a singer/songwriter and highland piper who has played with some of the greatest exponents in the field of piping. Tickets £8 from richard@thebagpiper.co.uk

MOZART CORONATION MASS

**St Peter and Paul Church,
Deddington OX15 0SA,
12th November, 7:30pm-
9:30pm**



As the largest choral group in the area, with over 100 members on the books, The Warriner Choral Society have a reputation for great performances and attract audiences from wide and far. Accompanied by the Oxford Sinfonia, this concert promises to impress! Featuring Mozart's Coronation Mass and Haydn's St Nicholas Mass, supported by professional soloists, you won't want to miss it! £12. Email tickets@warrinerchoralsociety.co.uk



WARWICK HEARING DOGS

**Chase Meadow
Community Centre,
Warwick CV34 6BT, 12th
November, 2pm-4.30pm**

A chance for local supporters of Hearing Dogs to get together and chat over a hot drink and a slice of homemade cake. There will be an auction and local crafters making wonderful homemade gifts for you to buy on the day. All proceeds to Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. Free entry, donations always welcome.

STORY BASH

**Banbury Museum, 12th
November, 10am-5pm
(pictured top right)**

Story bash day is the museum's biggest event of the year, celebrating the wonderful stories of Banbury and bringing



the museum collections to life. Listen to the brilliant storytelling of Katrice Horsley, join in the excitement with Colonel Robert Hammond's, Regiment of Foote, Ciitie of London Brigade. The Sealed Knot will be as noisy as always with lots of English Civil War displays for curious minds. Meet talented artists with a colourful array of face painting patterns and ideas - stunning! All activities are free.

www.banburymuseum.org

REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE AND SERVICE

**Banbury Town Hall, 13th
November, 10am-1pm**

Commemorating those who have served their country through the years.

BIRDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**Exeter Hall, Kidlington
OX5 1AB, 14th November,
7:45pm-9:15pm**

In this talk how climate change maybe already affecting bird distributions, populations and communities will be reviewed and summarised. The potential impact of future changes in bird species around the world will be assessed, and used to see how conservation practice may need to adapt in response. £2. Email publicity@anhso.org.uk



OUT AND ABOUT



ORCHESTRA OF ST JOHN'S PROM

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 15th November, 7:30pm-9:30pm

OSJ with Francesca Saracino, soprano. Mendelssohn *Songs Without Words*, Mahler *Kindertotenlieder*, Mahler *9th Symphony, 4th movement*. Orchestra of St John's with solo singers. John Lubbock will be the conductor. £25 chair (£10 bench). Email simon.payne@virgin.net

RAMBLERS WALK

Waterperry Gardens (overflow car park), 19th November, 10am (below)

An eight mile walk via Ickford and Worminghall. Bring a picnic. Café stop at the end.



BANBURY LITERARY LIVE

North Oxfordshire Academy, Drayton Road, Banbury OX16 0UD, 20th November, 10:30am-4:30pm

A great fun day out for all the family with 'live' performances of music, drama, and poetry; creative writing, cookery



and blogging workshops; gardening tips and travel tales; and top kids, teen and adult authors sharing their ideas... something for everyone. Also book signings, craft stalls and food from 'Naomi's Café'. Tickets: £5 a family (£2 single). Speakers are being kindly sponsored. Buy your tickets on the day or at Waterstones.

www.literarylives.co.uk

BURFORD SINGERS - MENDELSSOHN'S ELIJAH

Church of St John the Baptist, Burford OX18 4RY, 20th November, 7:30pm-9:30pm (above right)

Burford Singers with Cotswold Chamber Orchestra, Mendelssohn's

Relationship Breakdown

We offer clear legal advice and real solutions

Patrick Mulcare
E pmulcare@se-law.co.uk
T 01295 204000
www.se-law.co.uk

spratt endicott
SOLICITORS

BANBURY | BRACKLEY | BICESTER | BUCKINGHAM

SMITHS of BLOXHAM

PROPRIETORS: THOMAS SMITH, PETER SMITH, PAULINE SMITH

**METAL AND MACHINERY MERCHANTS
WEIGHBRIDGE FACILITIES UP TO 50 TONNES**

Scrap Cars & MoT - Failures Always Wanted
Waste Disposal Skip Service

**MILTON ROAD
BLOXHAM**

BANBURY • OXON • OX15 4HE

TELEPHONE: 01295 720286 • FAX: 01295 721062

**OPEN 7 DAYS
A WEEK**



WARWICK VICTORIAN EVENING

24th November, all over Warwick, 5pm-9pm (right)

Warwick's celebrated Victorian Christmas Evening. There will be a

Elijah has been a great favourite with singers and audiences alike, ever since Mendelssohn himself conducted the first performance - in Birmingham Town Hall - 170 years ago. Its dramatic depiction of Elijah's overthrow of the priests of Baal and his conversion of the people inspired Mendelssohn to create his great choral and orchestral masterpiece. £21, £17, £13 reserved, £10.50 unreserved, 01993 822412

packed programme of entertainment on stage in the Market Place where Father Christmas will help the Mayor of Warwick switch the town's Christmas lights on at 7pm.

GREAT HALL DINNER AND DISCO

Warwick Castle, dates 25th November to 22nd December, 7.30pm, £59

This Christmas take the opportunity to dine in the grand surroundings of the Great Hall and after



dinner join your friends and colleagues on the dancefloor to dance the night away!



ANTIQUES AT THE HOLT

The Holt Hotel, Steeple Aston OX25 5QQ, 26th - 27th November, 10am-4.30pm

The premier antiques and collectors' fair for Oxfordshire and the surrounding counties! One of the most popular and prestigious fairs of its kind. Forty dealers offering a wide range of quality items. Plenty of gift ideas for everyone! £1, under 16s free

TOWN MAYOR'S TOY APPEAL

Banbury Town Hall, 28th November - 2nd December, 10am-4pm

New toys, or second hand in excellent condition, can be donated on all five days. The toys should be suitable for children aged from baby to teenager. Donations will go to the Britannia Road Family Centre. The centre will make sure they reach the right homes.



Batsford

ARBORETUM & GARDEN CENTRE



Soak up the spectacular colour at Batsford this autumn. Browse our selection of gifts and garden goodies and treat yourself to a home-baked lunch or afternoon tea in our café. A perfect day out for all the family - dog friendly too!

Visit www.batsarb.co.uk for details on our forthcoming events

Batsford Arboretum and Garden Centre
Batsford, Moreton in Marsh, Gloucestershire
GL56 9AD Tel: 01386 701441
Email: arboretum@batsfordfoundation.co.uk
www.batsarb.co.uk



Truly a care home *with a difference...*

A state of the art 45-bed luxury care home, providing the highest quality residential and nursing care, with single en-suite rooms enjoying extensive views

“Everything was just as good as you said it would be, and more.”

Godswell Park is a state-of-the-art care residence the like of which is difficult to find elsewhere. Providing luxury service and exceptional nursing care our 45 en-suite rooms and ten apartments enjoy extensive views over our eight acres of grounds.

If you are looking for a care residence for yourself, a relative or a friend your choice should be based on the finer details. Situated in the picturesque village of Bloxham in North Oxfordshire our spacious, purpose-built environment with wheelchair access throughout the gardens boasts one of the best restaurants in the area.

Created with you in mind, two founder directors work full-time at Godswell Park and, together with the registered manager, work ceaselessly to promote our residents' best interests. Godswell Park was founded on the ethos that it should be a place where their own relatives would wish to stay. Our residents know that they can discuss any aspect of their care or life at Godswell Park with the directors or the registered manager at any time, meaning decisions can be made on the spot without delay.

At Godswell Park we believe that our nursing and care staff should be entirely responsible for the physical and social care of our residents without having to clean rooms and launder clothes. We have specialist hotel services staff to take care of those details, ensuring that nothing is overlooked. Godswell Park employs nearly 100 staff, ensuring that we have one of the highest staff to resident ratios in the country.

We believe strongly in the promotion of our residents' independence and mobility wherever possible. Our eight acre grounds include an extensive landscaped garden that is fully accessible to all residents, whether it be resting in the shade of a tree, painting watercolours in our summerhouse or just watching our flock of soay sheep. Our Sun Therapy Room is ideal for winter afternoons and our three day rooms are perfect for meeting friends or taking afternoon tea. Our 40-seat cinema shows a variety of films and dvds, chosen by residents.

These are your golden years – it's time to enjoy them! Our food is locally sourced wherever possible and cooked to order so that meals can be enjoyed either in our glass

fronted dining room which opens on to the terrace or in the privacy of your own room. Adjacent is the light-filled conservatory – ideal for a glass of sherry before lunch or to read the papers or partake in one of our formal afternoon teas.

At Godswell Park everything has been created to accommodate one's individual needs, and this includes the furnishings. Each room is arranged to your specific requirements, including personal items of furniture at your request, and benefits from the luxury of space and plenty of natural sunlight. Throughout the residence we have armchairs in a variety of heights and sizes, a library corner and numerous seating areas inside and out where you can enjoy the company of family and friends.

Choosing to take up residence at Godswell Park is about improving your quality of life and providing you with the opportunity to remain as independent as you wish.

“Godswell Park is a care home that simply refuses to fit the mould – truly a care home with a difference.”

“Godswell Park is a care home that simply refuses to fit the mould – truly a care home with a difference.”



GODSWELL PARK

www.godswellpark.co.uk

Tel: 01295 724000

Email: info@godswellpark.co.uk

GODSWELL PARK, CHURCH STREET, BLOXHAM, OXFORDSHIRE OX15 4ES





THE arty BIT

Barry Whitehouse
of The Artery in Parsons Street
www.thearteryonline.co.uk

WHEN SHOULD YOU TAKE UP ART CLASSES?

I regularly hear these words: 'I would love to go to an art class but I can't paint or draw'. This is a common misconception – you do not need to have any sort of ability to participate in an art class, as long as you have a passion and a willingness to learn then many classes will welcome you with open arms!

I think there is confusion between an art class, and an art group. Classes are tutored and are open to anyone no matter what their ability, whereas groups are generally untutored and will require some degree of artistic ability as you will be largely left to your own devices.

So if you have the urge to paint and draw but lack the ability, then an art class is exactly where you should be! If you are not sure where your nearest structured art class is, call into your local art shop and they should be able to direct you.

The Artery runs a number of art classes. For details see page 89.



THE DARKER SIDE OF ART

I thought that this month I would share the darker side of artist's lives.

One of my roles as an art tutor is as an art history lecturer for adult education colleges, and whilst it's always interesting to discuss paintings and how they are created, it is also extremely interesting to learn about the artists behind the canvas.

One thing I have noted over the years is that there are several personality traits in 'famous' artists throughout history – no matter if they are Impressionists, or from the Renaissance! Although these traits vary, it can be clearly shown how artists of note struggle with addiction (whether it's substance, women, or aspects of art). They may also create their own drama in their lives and are often never content with their career or home life as if the drama fuels their artistic drive and compels them to paint; but of all personality traits, passion plays a huge part in their life and it presents itself in many ways and

may be passion about their work, anger, frustration, or multiple mistresses!

So here a few artists or 'masters' and a little about how their passionate personalities lead them to make choices that would alter their careers...

ANDREA DEL SARTO (1486-1530)

Highly regarded during his lifetime as an artist *senza errori* ("without errors"), Andrea married Lucrezia (del Fede), in 1512. Lucrezia appears in many of his paintings, often as a Madonna. However, Vasari (his pupil and biographer) describes her as "faithless, jealous, and vixenish with the apprentices". She is similarly characterized in Robert Browning's poem.

Before the end of 1516 Del Sarto was invited to Paris in June of that year, along with his pupil Andrea Squarzzella, leaving his wife, Lucrezia, in Florence.

Lucrezia wrote to Andrea and demanded that he return to Italy. The King permitted this request, but only on the understanding that his absence from France was to be short.

He then entrusted Andrea with a sum of money to be expended in purchasing works of art for the French Court. However, Andrea took the money and used it to buy himself a house in Florence, thus ruining his reputation and preventing him from ever returning to France. What a hold his wife must have had over him that he decided he would rather displease the king of France than her!

In 1520 he resumed work in Florence and remained there until his death aged 43 during an outbreak of Bubonic Plague in either 1530 or 1531.

above: The Last Supper - Andrea del Sarto, 1519





CARAVAGGIO (1571-1610)

Born in Milan, he named himself after the nearby village of Caravaggio, but his real name was Michelangelo Merisi. He was one of the most powerful and influential artists of the 17th Century. He had widespread fame by his early 30s and struggled with a bad temper. On one occasion his temper even caused him to kill a man. Previously his high placed patrons protected him from the consequences of his escapades, but this time they could do nothing.

Caravaggio was outlawed and fled to Naples. Here he was outside the jurisdiction of the Roman authorities and was protected by the Colonna family. The most famous painter in Rome became the most famous painter of Naples!

Whilst in Naples an attempt was made on his life by persons unknown. At first it was reported in Rome that the "famous artist" Caravaggio was dead, but then it was reported that he was alive but seriously disfigured in the face. Around this time he painted David with the Head of Goliath, showing the young



David with a strangely sorrowful expression gazing on the severed head of the giant, which is Caravaggio's. This painting may have been sent to his patron – the unscrupulous Cardinal Scipione Borhese. In the summer of 1610 Caravaggio travelled to receive a pardon, which seemed imminent thanks to his powerful Roman friends. He took three paintings as gifts for the cardinal.

Shortly after an anonymous avviso (private newsletter) from Rome reported that Caravaggio was dead. Some scholars argue that Caravaggio was murdered by the same enemies that had been pursuing him since he fled Malta, or that Caravaggio may have died from lead poisoning. Bones with high levels of lead were recently found in a grave likely thought to have been Caravaggio's.

left: David with head of Goliath - Caravaggio, 1610

REMBRANDT (1606-1669)

Recognised as the greatest of all Dutch painters. He was a prolific draughtsman, etcher, and portraitist. He made

his fortune as a high profile painter, and his wealth grew when he married a woman with her own family money.

His wife Saskia died in 1642, his baby's nurse then became his mistress and she agreed to live with him without marrying him, but was soon replaced in his affections by a young servant who entered the house in 1645, she was 25 years his junior! He was sued for breach of promise by his (first) mistress but she was committed to an asylum for five years which effectively stopped legal proceedings and meant he could continue his relationship with his new younger lover. Due to a clause in his late wife's will stating that if Rembrandt remarried he would forfeit his share of his estate, he could again not legalise his relationship with his second and final mistress (Hendrikje). He was no longer earning from portrait painting as he had decided to try painting more mythical works which were not so popular. Rembrandt had difficulty in keeping up the payment on his expensive house and in early 1650 he became broke taking one loan out to pay another.

He died penniless!

top: The Night Watch - Rembrandt, 1642



ARTSURGERY

Holloway's

Auctioneers

*Early 19th
century British
School portrait
miniature sold
£320 in June.*



www.hollowaysauctioneers.co.uk
49 Parsons Street, Banbury OX16 5NB

Telephone 01295 817777
[enquiries@ hollowaysauctioneers.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hollowaysauctioneers.co.uk)



EXPERT ON HAND: A DEEPER EXPERIENCE OF COLD WAR FRONTIER

Banbury Museum, 12th November, 10.30am-12.30pm and 1.30-4.30pm

This is a fantastic chance to see and handle extra items relating to RAF Upper Heyford's history and ask questions of those who know the site well. Visit for a free drop in (no tickets required) and meet those involved in the production of the exhibition.



DRAWN TOGETHER

The Old Fire Station, 40 George Street, Oxford, OX1 2AQ, 9th-26th November, 11am-6pm

The vast treasure trove of anthropological artifacts, zoological specimens and archaeological objects in Oxford's Pitt Rivers, Natural History and Ashmolean museums have provided a rich source of inspiration for talented young local artist Isadora Reeves. Over the past three years she has filled stacks of sketchbooks with hundreds of drawings made during her frequent

trips to these museums, a selection of which are presented in this exhibition.



CROPREDY PAINTING GROUP EXHIBITION

Cropredy village hall, 27th November, 11am-4pm

This exhibition will be an opportunity for members to display examples of their work. There will also be several craft stalls so it presents a good opportunity to look for some unusual Christmas presents. There will be tea, coffee and homemade cake available.



LUCY PRATT - ALL AROUND ME

Fosse Gallery, Stow-on-the-Wold GL54 1AF, 7th - 24th November

Born in Oxfordshire in 1970, Lucy studied at Banbury School of Art, Loughborough School of Art and Cheltenham School of Art.

Lucy has the remarkable ability of being able to transform whatever she chooses to paint, into imagery which is refreshingly vital and colourful. Her work always appears to express her immediate spontaneous joy in painting the subject. She is able to communicate this

admirably with her use of great colour combinations and well-designed pictures. Thus we are all able to participate in the experience, leaving us with memories of breathing in lovely fresh air and knowing that it is good to be alive!



LINDA SGOLUPPI - PLATO'S CAVE

8 Derngate, Northampton, until 18th December

Linda Sgoluppi's contemporary paintings express how Alzheimer's changes reality for the sufferer and for those close to them, interpreted through the allegory of Plato's Cave. Plato likens people untutored in the 'Theory of Forms' to prisoners chained up in a cave. The prisoners know nothing about the world outside the cave, and they are constrained so they can only look directly ahead at a blank wall. The only things the prisoners can see are shadows cast by the shapes.



INTHEPICTURE

QUEEN VICTORIA IN PARIS

Watercolours from the Royal Collection at Compton Verney

In August 1855, with the Battle of Waterloo (1815) still vivid in the nation's collective memory, Queen Victoria made a momentous state visit to Paris. This exhibition organised by Royal Collection Trust in collaboration with Compton Verney displays the watercolours that were commissioned as mementoes of Queen Victoria's week in the French capital.

(left)



1



a picture paints A THOUSAND WORDS

words:
caroline jaques

Contemporary art is art that has been produced in the present time and as such it can be classed as 'modern art'. Modern art is often thought to be abstract only and, therefore, potentially meaningless - modern art gets really bad press. Referring to present day artists as 'contemporary', rather than 'modern', can lessen the idea that only 'pointless splashes of colour' will be displayed at an exhibition. Anyone who has been to a modern art exhibition will have heard the scathing whispers along the lines of

"I could do that myself". I always want to suggest that those people should go away and give it a go, then attempt to exhibit!

Strictly speaking, the term 'contemporary art' refers to art that has been produced by artists that are actually living today, so right now it would be art that has been produced from, say, the 1960's up until this very day. Art changes throughout time, styles and definitions are constantly updated, art 'fashion' moves on and, once upon a time, even Pre-Raphaelite artists could themselves have been considered contemporary.

If you are a die-hard traditionalist, your preference might be Turner, or Picasso, or Botticelli. But if you love art for art's sake, your tastes will likely stray far enough to take in some of the up and coming contemporary artists that are breaking through today.

The art you warm to does not necessarily need to be a painting, or sculpture, that you want to own, it simply needs to appeal to you,

for you to appreciate it for what it is, perhaps to love it and, finally, potentially a piece you want to live with. It is all so very personal and no-one can ever tell you that what you like is rubbish, or that you should like something because they themselves, or a journalist's review, have labelled it as being good. Who decides what is good and what is bad, after all? Personally I find Turner depressing, Tintoretto disturbing, Ford Madox Brown's *Walton-on-the-Naze* is enchanting and, clichéd though it sounds, I adore Monet.

Artists who have caught my eye recently include: Caroline Shotton, a commercial artist who embraces surrealism and impressionism to create her paintings, currently incorporating cows into her artwork. The results are very striking; and Conor Harrington, an Irish graffiti and street artist whose work now includes outdoor murals, as well as more traditional artworks for galleries. Neither of these artists produce work that I would want to display on my wall at home, but they draw me in nonetheless.

There are a few contemporary artists that really stand out for me, artists whose work I covet and one in particular that I have admired for more years than I care to admit to - all for completely different reasons.

Let's begin with British artist Scarlett Raven and her series *The Danger Tree*. This incredible young painter (born in 1986) can boast an exhibition before she even

completed her fine art degree and produced a painting fifteen years ago (presumably around the age of just 25) that made someone cry. Looking

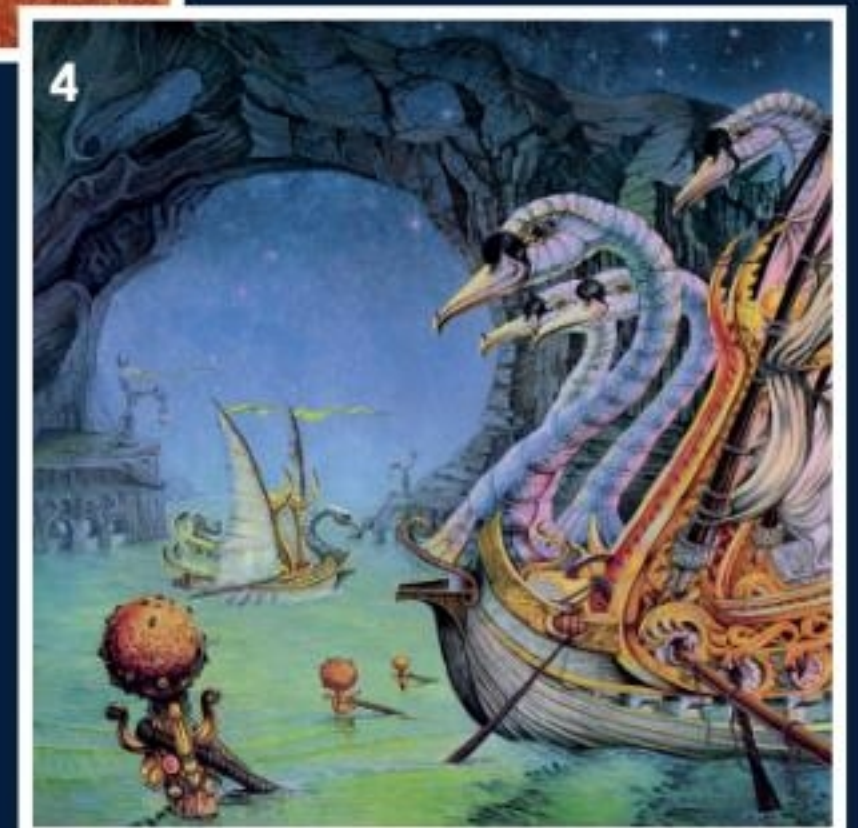
2



3



4





at her latest collection it is easy to understand why.

Far from being a body of work that is simply a series of paintings, Scarlett Raven incorporates a tool that is designed to take the painting process far and away beyond the canvas - she is the world's first Augmented Reality (AR) artist. Within the layers of her paintings there is a creative journey, where paint and pixels sit side by side. Within each painting there are literally thousands of other images, overlaid and layered to tell a deeply personal story. The story behind *The Danger Tree* series, released in honour of the *Battle of the Somme* centenary, is accessed using the *Blippar* app. The story is instantly accessible to anyone, each piece of art being an event in itself. The app brings her art to life, delving beneath the surface of the painting, revealing moving images and the words of war poets read by leading British actors (Sophie Okonedo, Sean Bean and Christopher Eccleston). The result is quite stunning. It is well worth tracking down her exhibits, now in various galleries throughout the *Four Shires*. My personal favourite is *The Soldier* - but I'd be happy to own them all!

Argentina born Fabian Pérez is my current artist of choice. I long to have one of his works adorning my wall and am instinctively drawn into galleries that I then discover are displaying his works. His paintings move me, he has an intense imagination that invites emotion and his works are sultry, sensual and deeply atmospheric. His collection of paintings featuring Saba are truly breathtaking and I find that many hours can be lost if I allow myself to



imagine what she might be thinking in each piece. The flamenco series is absolutely divine and although *Tango in Red* is no longer available, this is the painting I truly covet. I cannot imagine my need for owning it will ever wane! This summer brought forth an outstanding new collection featuring a range of inspirations from Fabian's life, including the beautiful *English Rose* who has become his most recent muse. Every work he has produced is, in my mind, a masterpiece.

Finally, I cannot ignore the man who inspired me to pursue an career in art. Far from becoming the teacher my mother had in mind, or studying for the degree in maths that my father thought would be perfect, my art teacher at school suggested that I might be more suited to graphic design. Much to the horror of both parents, I took his advice and went directly to art college. My art teacher was Roger Garland, who originally trained as a graphic designer, later becoming a seriously talented and well established illustrator who now exhibits his work, and that of his wife Linda, at their own gallery in Launceston. Roger is well known for his Tolkien artwork and *The Tolkien Collection* - over 70 paintings and drawings commissioned by the original publishers of JRR Tolkien's books - is permanently on display. Illustrations are included from *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, so anyone who has read these books will already know of Roger's work. If you're going to Devon or Cornwall, make a detour to marvel at the work on display at Lakeside Gallery.



1: *Tango in Red*, Fabian Pérez;
2: *Mugshot 1 - Out with a Bang*, Conor Harrington; 3: *Sunshine of Your Love*, Caroline Shotton; 4: *Haven of the Swans - Tolkien*, Roger Garland; 5: *Black Poppy*, Scarlett Raven; 6: *El Verson IV*, Fabian Pérez

Caroline Shotton: www.caroline.shotton.com; Conor Harrington: www.conorharrington.com; Fabian Pérez: www.fabianperez.com; Roger Garland: www.lakeside-gallery.com

JSFineArt

auctioneers & valuers



VALUATIONS FOR INSURANCE,
PROBATE AND SALE.
FORTNIGHTLY AUCTIONS OF
GENERAL ANTIQUES & INTERIORS.
REGULAR SPECIALIST AUCTIONS
OF FINE ART AND ANTIQUES.

COTEFIELD AUCTION ROOMS ● OXFORD ROAD
BANBURY ● OXFORDSHIRE ● OX15 4AQ
www.jsfineart.co.uk ● enquiries@jsfineart.co.uk ● 01295 272488



FANTASY ADVENTURE



A groundbreaking new platform that connects video games, smart digital action figures, augmented reality and interactive trading cards in ways never seen before has begun and is available for hardened (and unhardened) gamers to really get involved. There's more to this release than just a simple game and it's been brought to our attention by one of the team's designers, Tom Jaques, who started out his animation career at Banbury College.

Having grown up in the *Four Shires'* Oxfordshire countryside, Tom (the son

of *Four Shires'* designer) wanted nothing more from the age of just eight than to be an animator and character artist. The focus has never waned and after completing school education in Banbury and Middleton Cheney, followed by the excellent foundation art course at Banbury College and an animation degree from Bournemouth, Tom is now following his dreams and, after a few years in London, is now very happily working for Playfusion in Cambridge on one of world's largest RPG games.

PlayFusion is an innovative independent

game environment (top)
in the game (left)
concept art (below)





game, technology and robotics company founded by the leadership and key talent behind the massively popular MMORPG *RuneScape*. They are now proud to unveil *Lightseekers*, the future of connected play, and it's currently featured on Kickstarter, where you can get involved before the full release.

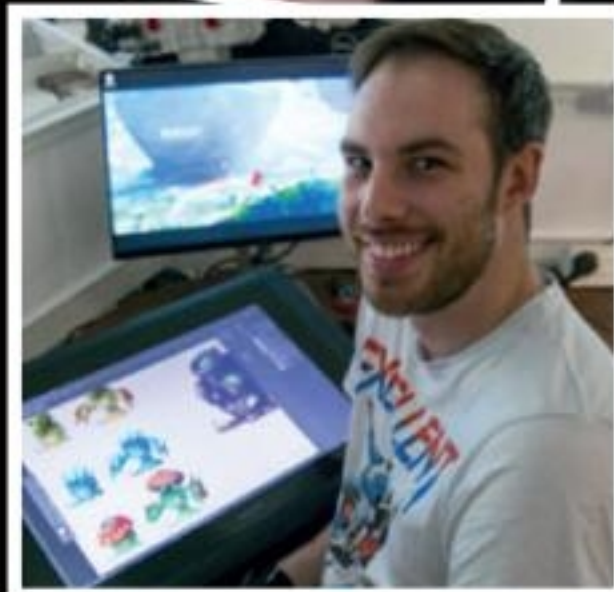
Lightseekers is more than just a mobile game; it is the fusion of fantasy and reality that integrates video games, smart action figures with artificial intelligence, augmented reality, interactive trading cards



and more, creating the most ambitious transmedia entertainment platform ever envisioned.

*"After eighteen grueling months of working in complete stealth mode, we're ready to take the world by storm. Our team is pumped to finally unveil *Lightseekers* and clearly demonstrate how this is a game-changer for many industries," states Mark Gerhard CEO and Co-Founder of PlayFusion. "*Lightseekers* takes everything the world currently thinks about toys-to-life, turns it on its head and makes it a massively more connected experience, more integrated, more intelligent, more mobile, more interactive and more engaging than ever before, for gamers of all ages."*

The game will be free to download with no in-app purchases and is reinforced by an epic, ever-changing storyline that will be updated weekly so there will always be new adventures, new lands and new characters to experience. It will immerse players in a deep, vibrant, lore-filled world, while seamlessly integrating fantasy with



above: Mark Gerhard CEO and Co-Founder of PlayFusion; some of the team at Playfusion

right: trading cards
below: the whole team and the *Lightseekers* logo



reality in completely new, innovative and compelling ways, including seamlessly connecting to 7" collector-quality, articulated digital action figures - your hero will be instantly transported into the game, enabling real-time two-way interaction between the game and the figures as well as between each other.

There are also interchangeable accessories - weapons, pets or accessories will have an immediate effect in the game and vice versa, opening up new abilities and adventures. They can even be shared in real life, and friends can "level them up" and return them with more experience and power than before.

Add a complete interactive collectible trading card



game with 386+ cards and the *Lightseekers* universe further enhanced, delivering immersive augmented reality experiences, rewards game players, and unlocks powerful in-game abilities. The app can even reward players by interacting with almost anything - including songs on the radio, shows on TV, movies and posters on the wall.

You can get involved ahead of the planned full retail launch in Spring 2017 via Kickstarter and benefit from exclusive rewards such as early play, access to the first action figures, cards, weapons and other accessories. Kickstarter completes early in November, so you'll need to be quick. Go to: www.kickstarter.com/projects/playfusion/lightseekers

below: action figures



EGG*heads*



There can be many strange customs witnessed at country fetes, fairs and shows around the *Four Shires*. We have witnessed greasy pole climbing, apple bobbing, piano smashing and tug o' war competitions.

More recently of course, visitors may have taken a shot at the coconut shy, splatting a rat or capturing a (rubber) duck by the neck.

At a recent country fete at Culworth however, a totally new countryside event has been witnessed. Not content with holding their tug o' war over the stream separating Culworth from Eydon, Culworth residents are risking a splattering themselves as part of their egg throwing competition (witnessed here).

It seems that competitors take turns to throw eggs across an ever increasing space with the inevitable consequences! The winners are, presumably, those who can throw the egg the furthest without risking a break...

picture by Jonathan Wain





Sleigh bells ring, are you listening?...

compiled by
cathy black



CHRISTMAS MARKETS AND FAIRS

**Stratford Upon Avon
Christmas Fayre, Stratford
Racecourse, 4th – 6th
November, 10am**

Christmas is coming early this year with the premier Christmas gift, craft, homeware and food-buying event in Stratford-upon-Avon with 100+ handpicked exhibitors. A festive treat with great gifts, sumptuous food and great entertainment.

**Harbury Craft fair, Harbury
Village Hall, South
Parade, 12th November,
9am-5pm**

A mixture of stalls selling hand crafted items

from cards, chocolate, jewellery, honey, and much more. Food and drinks are available throughout the day. All proceeds are donated to the local charity, Myton Hamlet Hospice.

**Save the Children
Christmas Fair, Stratford-
Upon-Avon town hall,
1 Sheep Street, 19th
November, 10am-4pm**

A place to buy cards, wrapping paper, homemade cakes and hand knitted children's clothes, together with tickets for their Christmas Raffle. Light refreshments will be available.

**Christmas Market,
Hatton Country World,
Warwick, 19th – 20th
November, 10am-5pm**

Lots of crafts, home wares, garden items and children's gifts.

**Woodstock
Christmas
Market,
St Mary
Magdalene
Church, Woodstock, OX20
1SJ, 26 November, 10am-
7:30pm**

With an array of exhibitors showcasing a range of wares from jewellery and jigsaws to hand bags and knits; woodcraft and paintings, photos and cards; soaps and wax art to crackers and cushions. There will be musical entertainment throughout the event. Free entry.

**Independent Oxford
Christmas Market, The
Old Fire Station, Oxford,
OX1 2AQ, 26 November,
10am-5pm**

Knock your Christmas socks right off your feet at this year's Independent Oxford Christmas Gift Market! Find the very best that the city's independent businesses have to offer, across two of Oxford's brilliant venues.

There will be 30 stalls spread across the Old Fire Station and Turl Street Kitchen, with indie goodies, a range of workshops and the chance to win a bumper hamper of indie goodies. Free entry.

**Living Crafts for Christmas,
Blenheim Palace, Oxford
Road, Woodstock,
OX20 1PP, 17th - 20th
November, 10am-5:30pm**

Christmas shopping in style at Living Crafts for Christmas, a highlight of the festive season at



Blenheim Palace



Hatton Country World
below: the Christmas
market in Frankfurt





Blenheim Palace. 150 British designer-makers, individual gifts, special commissions and simple stocking fillers, as well as millinery, ceramics, studio glass, leather work, sculpture, textile crafts, photography, toys and puzzles, fashions, soaps, designer jewellery and more. A park and gardens ticket will be required to visit this fair.

Royal Leamington Spa Christmas lights switch on, 20th November, the parade

Experience the beauty of Royal Leamington Spa as it's magically lit up during the festive lead-up.

Buckingham Christmas Light Switch on, 26th November

People gather outside the Old Gaol to see the Mayor switch on the lights and to sing carols round the tree. There is also a Christmas Artisan Market during the afternoon and evening with festive goodies.



Bath Christmas Market



Northampton Christmas sparkle fair, The Benham Sports Arena, Kings Park Road, 26th - 27th November, 10am-4pm

Find beautifully made, quality Christmas gifts, decorations, fashion and beauty from over 120 independent retailers all under one fabulously festive roof!

Banbury Christmas lights switch on and festive market, 27th November, 1pm-8pm

Switch on is 5pm around the tree outside the Town Hall to launch Banbury into the festive season. There will be music, food and entertainment, and of course Father Christmas.

Christmas fair at Waddesdon Manor, Aylesbury HP18 0JH, 16th November - 11th December, 11am-6pm, Wednesday's - Sunday's

Overlooking the parterre and with the illuminated

house as its backdrop, this year features 60 exhibitors across four weeks. With local artisan producers alongside some of the best loved independent traders from

around the country, the fair will offer visitors a great selection of unusual Christmas gifts and festive foods.

Oxford Christmas Market, Broad Street, 8th - 18th December

Christmas carols, market traders offering unusual and handmade gifts, colourful decorations brightening wooden stalls and the aroma of mulled wine and cinnamon drifting in the air - a visit to the Oxford Christmas Market is a truly magical Christmas experience.

A LITTLE FURTHER AFIELD...

Festive Gift Fair, NEC, Birmingham, 10th - 13th November

Combine your Christmas shopping with an entertaining, inspiring and fun day out! The fair is bursting at the seams with 350 stalls selling a

huge variety of cracking gift ideas, delicious food treats and Christmas decorations that don't cost the earth.

Bath Christmas Market, 24th November - 11th December

Each year the centre of Bath is transformed into a magical Christmas shopper's paradise, as over 170 chalets packed full of gorgeous Christmas gifts line the streets surrounding the Roman Baths and Bath Abbey.

Frankfurt Christmas Market, Victoria Square, New Street, Birmingham, 17th November - 29th December

The largest authentic German Christmas market outside of Germany or Austria, Birmingham's Frankfurt Christmas Market offers a large range of traditional goods and gifts and a selection of tempting food and drink. Pretzels, schnitzels, bratwursts, and roasted almonds will tempt your tastebuds, all of which can be washed down with gluhwein, weissbeer (wheat beer), or tasty hot chocolate.





MAKE HER FEEL *loved and wanted*



It almost doesn't matter what you buy, as long as you've given some thought to what might make her happy. She loves things that sparkle and things that make her feel warm and cosy on a winter's evening. Perfume and chocolates are always a winner, footwear and lingerie are great - but make sure you know her size in that particular store (they are all different!) and don't forget socks. Traditionally socks have been seen as one of the most boring gifts of all time, but it simply is not true. Your lady would be thrilled to find some lovely, soft, new socks in her Christmas stocking - she buys them for everyone else but never gets given any. So surprise her - buy socks!



CACTUS

LADIES COLLECTIONS

PEPE JEANS

GREAT PLAINS

FRENCH
CONNECTION

WHITE STUFF

DARLING

NICE THINGS

Ladies clothing & Accessories

19b Parsons Street, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 5LY

Find us on [t](#) [f](#)



Ana coat, £109 and Monroe jacket £89 (left); Amielle cape jacket, £99 (above), all by Darling, from Cactus, 20 Parsons Street Banbury OX16 5LY. Call 01295 262805 or visit www.cactusbanbury.com

opposite top: Ferrero Rocher Grand, £4 at Wilko; L'Occitane en Provence Verbena Shea Butter extra gentle soap, £5; Paco Rabanne Black XS, £40.50, The Frangrance Shop; faux fur throw, £39, Very

pposite below: Helen Moore pom pom gloves, £40 and Happy Socks, £28, both House of Fraser; Crabtree and Evelyn hand therapy set, £22 exclusive to John Lewis

right: poncho, £50; jacket, £185; shirt, £50; jeans, £100, all Betty Barclay

left: eyeshadow quad by Tom Ford, £64; Moda in Pelle Porzia ankle boots, £159.95; Phase Eight Sapphia suede bag, £99;

far right: faux fur tippet scarf, £16, M&Co;



Tom Dixon oil pillar candle, £65, Amara



GLITZ *and* GLAMOUR

The party season is upon us and that means glamorous evening wear, cute cocktail dresses and Christmas colours, but most of all it means you have the freedom to wheel out as much glitter and sequins as you like! This is 'girl season'. Evenings are pretty and sparkly and extravagant, so don't hold back. Even glitter up your make-up... Buy what you love, wear what you want, feel like a Disney princess and have an amazing time!



main image: evening wear from Matalan

below: Phase Eight sassy sequined jacket, £120; sequin skirt from Next, £38; glitter ankle boots from Matalan, £25; black and silver Orbit ankle boots from Dune, £130; black velvet peep toe shoes from Next, £40





main image: Lipsy Love Michelle Keegan, £75 at Next

below: glitter clamp watch, £25 from Wallis; gold sequin jacket, £69, M&S; short multi-glitter skirt, £36, River Island; long Per Una sequin skirt, £49.50, M&S; animal print Aiyana shoes, £75, Dune

right, from top: navy frill side dress, £65, Next; black sparkly dress, Linea at House of Fraser, £48; blue sequin dress, £69.99, Bonprix; blue Edison handbag, £65, Dune - also available in other colours





SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS



Spirit of Christmas Fair
31 OCT - 6 NOV 2016
OLYMPIA LONDON | HOUSE OF AGATHA

Four Shires can provide eight lucky readers with free tickets to 'The Spirit of Christmas Fair' at Olympia in London this month.

To be in with a chance to receive free tickets, please get in touch with Four Shires' magazine either by post, email or telephone... the first eight to contact us will receive the special codes that can be redeemed on The Spirit Of Christmas Fair's website.

The Spirit of Christmas Fair showing at Olympia in London - from 31st October until 6th November - is the UK's biggest luxury Christmas market with thousands of unique present ideas all under one roof with seven days of stylish shopping. There will be a collection of 750 independent boutiques - it is the perfect place to shop in

the first week of November. Olympia is transformed into a huge mall, with gifts from a huge range of brands plus many free interactive workshops where you can obtain expert advice on all things Christmas including flower arranging or party planning.

www.spiritofchristmasfair.co.uk
- The website for the ticket redemption is below:

www.spiritofchristmas.seetickets.com/tour/spirit-of-christmas-fair/



VOTE FOR BANBURY IN 'THE GREAT BRITISH HIGH STREET AWARDS' 2016

Banbury, which has been our base since the magazine was set up some 19 years ago, is just one of the local finalists to be announced in the Great British High Street Awards 2016.

With the results now in the awards need your help. As well as receiving a visit from an expert judging panel, you can vote for your favourite Great British High Street and High Street Hero by visiting www.thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk

Categories including *Four Shires* High Streets:

TOWN CENTRE

Three vibrant town centres that are fighting to transform their high streets.

- Banbury, Oxfordshire
- Blackburn, Lancashire
- Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire

SMALL MARKET TOWN

Three fantastic places that put community at the heart of everything they do.

- Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire
- Hebden Bridge, Calderdale, Yorkshire
- Thame, Oxfordshire

BEST UNDER 25

Three young people blazing a trail on their high streets

- Emily Cotterill, Winchester
- Cameron Bennett, Reigate, Surrey
- Imogen Haverty, Chipping Norton

BEST SHOP ON TWITTER

- The Artery, Banbury, Oxfordshire - @thearteryshop
- Fleetwood Beach, Lancashire - @Fleetwoodbeach
- Heart Gallery, Hebden Bridge, Calderdale, West Yorkshire - @HeartGallery

Voting closes on the 18th November.



This Christmas Give the Gift of Fitness at Spiceball Leisure Centre



To purchase your Christmas gifts
Call (01295) 257522/817348

Vouchers to be redeemed by 31st March 2016. Terms and conditions apply.

expressions
fitness

leisurecentre.com

Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

legacyleisure

Working in partnership with your Local Authority



give him WHAT HE WANTS!

It's been suggested that men have no specific desires when it comes to Christmas gifts, that what they really want is what they've already got, just a new version of it. In that case we can offer them exactly what they want - from new shirts and trousers, new jackets and shoes, or a smart new tie. If clothes aren't on his list, then what about a new holdall, some new wellies, a new toolkit, or a nice new bottle of something to replace the one that's almost finished? If all else fails, then consider something he doesn't already have - a gym membership!

Our local suppliers have everything your man could possibly want, and featured on these pages are gifts to please the man in your life from the following places:

Henry's of Banbury: 52 High Street, Banbury OX16 5JJ
Call 01295 251044 or visit www.henrysofbanbury.co.uk

Union Menswear: 78 High Street, Banbury OX16 5JG
Call 01295 278085

Farol: Boddington Road, Daventry NN11 6FL
Call 01327 264844 or visit www.farol.co.uk

For gym memberships, look at Spiceball Leisure Centre in Banbury (www.leisurecentre.com/spiceball-leisure-centre, gym and pool pictured left top and inset) or Whittlebury Hall, Silverstone (www.whittleburyhall.co.uk, the spa area is pictured left).

For the practical man there are saws and screwdrivers, wellies and bags, along with a plethora of 'dangerous man toys' to be found at Farol in Byfield, Daventry. You could even surprise him with a ribbon-wrapped lawnmower!

Teng Tools
127 piece
metric &
AF toolKit,
£144; STIHL
HSA25
cordless
lithium-ion
shrub shears,
£95, both
from Farol



Le Chameau boot
bag in bronze,
£27.50; Le Chameau
Ceres Neo
handmade rubber
boots, £140, both
from Farol



Henry's of Banbury



MENSWEAR TO HIRE OR PURCHASE

52, High Street, Banbury, Oxon, OX16 5JJ
01295 251044
www.henrysofbanbury.com



*main image: Digel suiting
from Henry's of Banbury*

*left, from top: MMX jeans;
Van Buck tie; Venti shirts,
all from Henry's of
Banbury*

*below right: Ted Baker
victory leather holdall in
tan, rrp £319; John White
Boswell tan brogue, rrp
£160, both from Union
Menswear*

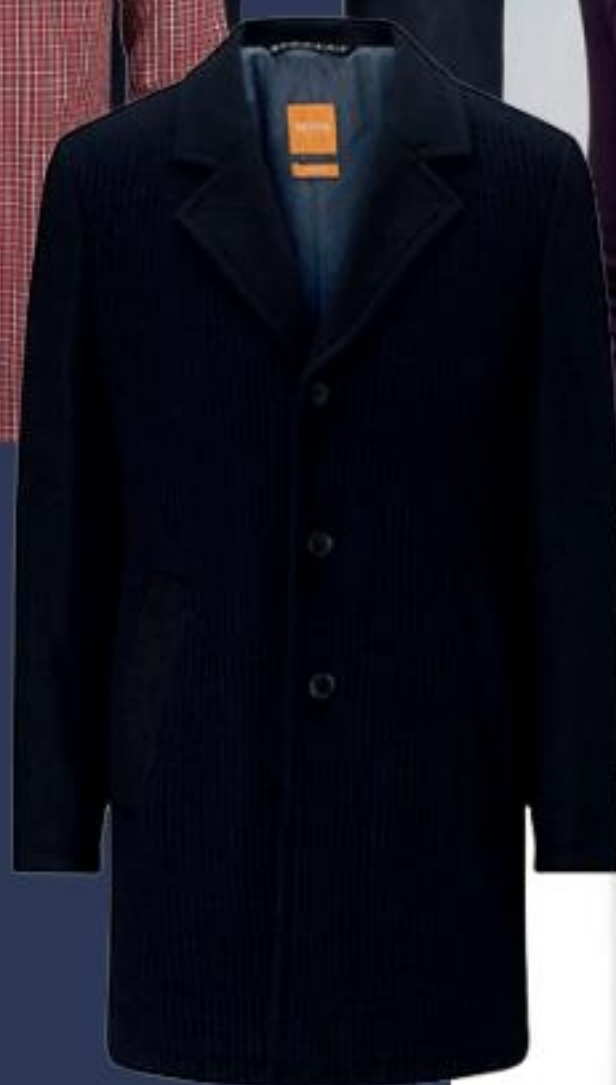




give him WHAT HE WANTS!

right: Fred Perry red long sleeve shirt, £80; Armani jeans, £100; Hugo Boss Balley coat, £300; Ted Baker Ronald long sleeve polo in purple, £79. all from Union Menswear

Barker Shoes, shown in cedar and dowl, both from Henrys of Banbury



If he's a whisky lover, try The Macallan Gold, the 1824 Series single malt's natural colour, The Macallan Gold has notes of vanilla followed by dark chocolate, with lingering floral and light oak notes and is a truly special single malt to toast this Christmas. (rrp £35).

Alternatively, Highland Park 12 Year Old is the ideal gift for fans of flavour and the perfect accompaniment for your Christmas pudding. This single malt is at the heart of Highland Park's core range and is a rich and well-balanced whisky boasting a honey sweetness, followed by fruity notes with a hint of gentle smoke. (RRP £35).



UNION

MENSWEAR

REMUS UOMO
AW16

REMUS UOMO
AW16

TED BAKER
LONDON

AJ | ARMANI
JEANS

BOSS
HUGO BOSS

FRED PERRY

Lyle & Scott



above: STIHL HSA25 cordless lithium-ion shrub shears, £95, from Farol



don't mind doing it for the kids

Get a huge smile from your little darlings when you select one of these fun gifts and games that will keep them amused for long enough for you to get the Christmas dinner all prepared.



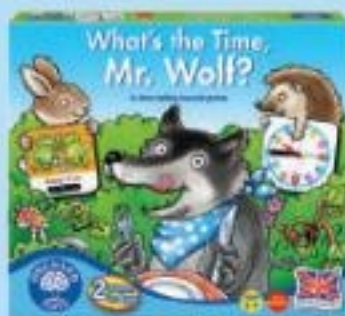
above: child's raccoon handbag by Coral Candy, £20; All About Nature pond dipping kit, £13 at www.crafts4kids.co.uk; Once Upon a Time jigsaws, £7.50, Orchard Toys



right: John Deere Children's pedal tractor and trailer, £69; John Deere front loader toy tractor, £32.50, both from Farol

far right, from top: woodland animal croquet set by

Little Ella James, £59 at www.ellajames.co.uk; wooden pizza toy, £22 at www.mylstyears.com; Wooden Name train by Letteroom from £6 at www.theletteroom.com; vintage rose and white tea set and personalised invitations by Birdyhome, £25.75



above and right: What's the Time Mr Wolf, £9.50; Follow That Car, £7.50, both Orchard Toys



CAPTURING MOVEMENT IN STEEL



"My work is all about movement, I want people to look at my work and feel the energy move through them as it moves through the

pieces. My inspirations come from organic free form structures which work together to create a sense of direction, accentuated by my use of lines both with edge and texture. I want my work to convey elegance and subtlety through the malleable use of forged and formed steel, a material that in my eyes is as organic as a tree or a plant, it too expands and grows, and it is a beautiful element, preserving its form for many years to come. My work is product based, as I want it to have a use, being an integral part of the environment like any natural form, enhancing its surroundings, a use which can be touched and where the artistry can be appreciated."



the art of the blacksmith

words: jeremy wilton



top left: portrait of Kelly
Picture: Martin Avery

left: Kelly, at work
picture: Jo Wyton

Talented artist

blacksmith
Kelly Burton

runs a forge based studio at The Old Dairy Farm Crafts Centre near Weedon Bec, just off the A5. Here she produces wonderful one off bespoke commissions in mild steel. Her recent commissions have included: gates, lighting structures, railings, hat stands, chandeliers, fire screens, decorated hanging basket brackets, exterior dividers and bundles of flowers for both garden and interior settings.

Originally from Norfolk, Kelly wanted to study fine art, but having been declined a place at Chelsea



School of Art she decided to take a foundation course in the subject. Kelly said: "I had always painted in what people thought of as a 'Turner style' and wanted to pursue this at college. I decided, having missed out at Chelsea, to take a year's foundation course. I'm glad I did as I was turned on to working with steel and not painting!"

Kelly enrolled at Hereford College of Arts and graduated in 2010.

"There was still a link to my painting as I was enthused by the thought of working with fire – this featured prominently in my early paintings.

We all had differing styles at college. Each blacksmith could be making the same piece, but they would all turn out entirely different, in a way it is like painting, each individual blacksmith creates their own style, for example some produced crisp, clean pieces, whereas other blacksmiths' were more rustic, making sure the hammer marks could still be seen in the work."

Kelly has chosen to be based at the craft centre near Weedon having moved here with her husband who works in motorsport.

"The crafts centre is great, we all tend to muck in and help one another here. It's a great venue, people like to visit, have a coffee at the restaurant and visit the artists' studios and retail shops."

Kelly works in an art nouveau style, working this into the malleable mild steel.

"People say I don't look like a blacksmith as I don't look strong enough, (or have a big hairy beard!) I tell them that blacksmithing is more about technique, obviously strength helps, but there is usually more than one way of doing something. My work can take anything from three days to three weeks to three months to

nickel coloured flowers
picture: Mathew Olley



complete. I usually start with a drawing and will often construct a maquette to help me realise the work".

For Kelly, job satisfaction is a very important part of her work. She commented: "I like to work together with the client, but I am not afraid to offer them options. Of course if there are structural considerations I make my clients aware of them. Each job is uniquely different, it is testing and exciting all



picture: Martin Avery

at the same time; even now I finish a piece and think to myself did I really make that. I look forward to handing over my work to the customer, and seeing that they are just as pleased and amazed as I am."

Kelly offers Taster days (both full and half) along with her bespoke commissions, all the information can be found at www.kellyburtonartistblacksmith.co.uk





if you need INSPIRATION...



FOR HOME LOVERS

Give a gift to enhance the home. Choose from practical items to fun and glitzy decorations, or just something that will give a home a wonderful aroma...

stacking mug set by Gillian Arnold, £42.50, www.gillianarnold.co.uk

Christmas Spice defuser by the Oil Hut, £32, www.theoilhut.co.uk

wooden home sign light by lights for fun, £20, www.lights4fun.co.uk

vintage home blackboard by Dibor, £14, www.dibor.co.uk

orange glaze ceramic vase, £16 at Habitat

FOR FOOD LOVERS



above: an olive wood pestle and mortar by The Rustic Dish, £20, www.therusticdish.com; personalised engraved cheese board set by Dust and Things, £32.99, www.dustandthings.com

Or for an experience, why not give a voucher for The Wykham Arms at Sibford Gower? Call 01295 708888.



THE WYKHAM ARMS
SIBFORD GOWER



FOR GARDEN LOVERS

There's plenty to do in the garden all year around and nothing better than to have all the right tools to hand, but when the garden lover runs out of chores they'll also love something a little different to keep them amused out in the bush!

left and below: keeping watch in the garden - Gnomeland Security garden gnome by MigMouth Inc, £19.60, www.amazon.co.uk; bee and bug nesting home by Damson, £25, www.notonthehighstreet.com; personalised grapevine by The Gluttonous Gardener, £40, www.glut.co.uk



CRAFTS for CHRISTMAS

Enjoy your Christmas shopping in the magnificent setting of Blenheim Palace which is hosting **Living Crafts for Christmas** from Thursday 17th-Sunday 20th November. This festive shopping extravaganza showcases the best of British craftsmanship with 160 acclaimed designer-makers



from across the UK. Brimming with presents with a personal touch, there is a wide choice of contemporary craft; millinery, ceramics, studio glass, leather work, sculpture, textile crafts, photography, toys, baubles, candles, fashions, soaps, wreaths and designer jewellery to mention just a few! Tastes of Christmas features indulgent foodie gifts, hampers and festive treats, everything from connoisseur preserves and waxed truckles to flavoured oils, relishes and Christmas cakes and don't forget

FESTIVE SHOPPING



to try special occasion wines, fruit liqueurs and whiskeys.

Twinkling Christmas trees will transform the colonnades into a winter wonderland and festive entertainment add to the ambience. The formal gardens, lakeside walks and beautiful parkland are majestic in their winter glory, just waiting to be explored and a feast of winter warming food and drink will be available.

Living Crafts for Christmas is a fantastic day out for all the family and an ideal opportunity to tick off your present shopping list.

Visit www.livingcrafts.co.uk for further details and tickets.



DO YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING IN STYLE !

Living Crafts for Christmas



Enjoy choosing perfect presents from over 160 designer-makers showcasing the best of British contemporary craft together with some delicious seasonal food & drink.



Thursday 17th - Sunday 20th November



Advance Tickets via website • Open 10:00am - 5:30pm • Event Details ☎ 02392 863 871

www.livingcrafts.co.uk



For a truly personal **Christmas gift** call in and see us!

Bespoke design
Small orders

Great prices
Local printer

Mugs, canvas and jute bags4life, umbrellas, smartfone and tablet cases, coasters, tableware, clothing, sports towels and much more.

Or if you have another idea, contact us and see if we can do it.

We are based in Wardington, just outside Banbury, so you can visit to discuss your project and collect it when finished.



Telephone: **01295 758889**

e: studio@e-typepress.co.uk

w: www.e-typepress.co.uk



The E-TYPE Press, Lakeview Court, Wardington Manor, Wardington, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX17 1SW

ATTENDANT SERVICE *and a slice of cake!*



1

1: the garage workshop – a building has been on the site since 1880; 2: a good range of automobilia; 3: automobilia; 4: In 1920 the garage started selling fuel; 5: the café/bar in the garage; 6: Bernie, Chris and Nikita Hewitt at the counter of their traditional family run garage; 7: Chris at the door of Clarke Brothers; 8: the site of the original Clarke Brothers garage, behind the Wheatsheaf pub in the centre



2



3



4



To the north west of the *Four Shires'* region, the A5 carves a diagonal borderline that stretches from London all the way up to Holyhead in north Wales.

The route pre-dates the M1 and was the main road connecting the capital with the north west. Not surprisingly, many garages sprung up on the road servicing the increasing number of vehicles using it.

One such garage, that of the Clarke Brothers, was set up near Weedon Bec in the 19th century. The garage is still there to this day. ►





9: Chris Hewitt outside the Weedon garage; 10: Bernie Hewitt and her cakes; 11: the garage; 12: Bernie Hewitt and her Pomeranian 'Florence'; 13: a model engine and workings; 14: view of the garage; 15: automobilia; 16: genuine mechanic's workshop doors; 17: Nikita and Bernie Hewitt in the barbers in the garage 18: a 70's wurlitzer jukebox; 19: petrol pumps



12



What sets Clarke Brothers apart from many other garages in the region however, is the way it is being run.

Under the ownership of Chris and Bernie Hewitt for the past 15 years, the garage is a treasure trove of retro automobilia as well as good old fashioned service.

Bernie commented: "Our garage is a hub for a good deal of our customers, we know most of them by name and many use us as an information centre. We are proudly independent – a traditional garage."

Chris said: "It's a lifestyle business, we've taken this garage back to how we believe it used to be."

As well as providing all the usual garage services and petrol (attendant service of course), there is a barbers shop within the building along with a retro café bar and sweet shop!

Famous admirers of the garage include radio DJ Jo Whiley and snooker man Jimmy White.

Bernie said: "We do attract interesting characters, one day we had a chap turn up and stand outside playing his bagpipes!"

Another reason people visit the Weedon garage is the quality of the cakes and coffee on offer. On the mornings we visited we sampled filo pastry mince pies and Bailey's chocolate chip bread and butter cake... we advise you to make a visit soon!



17



18



19



THE MONEY PIT

Most of us will remember *The Money Pit* - the fantastic film that starred Tom Hanks and Shelley Long. They buy a country estate at a suspiciously low price and sink great amounts into the property in a barrage of funny incidents that would test even the 'savviest' homebuyer.

Joking aside however, many of us have been in this situation, writes *Cathy Black*.

We have seen the property of our dreams, begged and borrowed funds to purchase it, before putting our current property on the market in the hope of a quick sale, so that the aforementioned dream house doesn't get snapped up.

The months seem to drag as prospective buyers survey your home, each with differing opinions on your style. Wondering about the position of the bathroom and if your children's artwork should be so proudly displayed on the wall. Finally you have received an offer, albeit a cheeky one, which you have haggled up and finally accepted - subject to contract of course!

This is only the beginning.

Next comes the six to eight week wait before contracts are signed and your dream property

is secured. This is still not the end. Before moving you have to deal with the sorting, packing and persuading the children that they really don't need that half broken toy they no longer play with.

Most of us will also deep clean our old house to ensure that it is handed over in the best possible condition.

Eventually of course, moving day arrives. This usually involves a lot of back and forth and family help, before you finally flop on your sofa surrounded by boxes and eat the obligatory chip shop tea!

Along with marriage and having children, moving house has to be one of the top three stress inducers for most people. Here are a few tips on how to deal with home mover stress;

- The time in which it takes from agreed sale to moving date will vary greatly, although you can





expect an average wait of at least six-eight weeks. You can help speed up the process by supplying your solicitors and mortgage advisor with all the information they need to complete the conveyancing in a timely fashion.

- **Moving whilst you have young children** will pose its own challenges. When we mentioned to our four year old son that 'Mummy and Daddy were thinking of selling our house so that we can get one with a bigger garden for him and his sister to play in', his first response, through a torrent of tears, was 'but what about my Lego!'. It is difficult for younger children to understand the concept of moving house and the fact that all of the belongings will be coming to the new home with you. It is important therefore to involve them as much as possible. Ask what colour they would like their new room to be and although it may take a little longer, ask for their help with packing so that they feel included. Although you can only really talk about your new home in 'ifs and maybes' (until the contracts are exchanged) it is important they have at least seen pictures of the new place so that it doesn't come as a complete shock when moving day does arrive.

- **Be organised.** By writing lists of everything that needs to be done and keeping track of all the

documents you have and need you will make the whole process a lot less daunting. Keep everything for your old house in one folder and everything for your new home in another. This way you will have everything to hand when asked to supply it.

- **Start sorting as soon as possible.** From the moment your offer is agreed you can start the mammoth task of filtering out your belongings. Although it may take time for the sale to proceed you will need this time to go through your possessions and decide what to keep and what can either be donated to the new owners or given to charity. Remember there is probably no point in keeping things that have travelled with you from loft to loft for many years. The likelihood is if you haven't used them in this time you aren't going to. It is much easier to sort out what you really need before you move than once you have lugged it to yet another property where it will likely resume its position gathering dust in the loft.

- **Be prepared to feel 'out of sorts'.** You're going to be living in chaos for a while, with boxes everywhere and things may feel a little out of

control. It's normal to be upset when you can't find the spatula or the frying pan; just remember to consult your lists and know that you're organised and on track for the move. You've done the work, and even though there's still more to go, it will get done.

- **Ask for help.** Sometimes it's difficult to ask for help. But remember, most people have been through at least one move in their lives and understand how hard it can be. Ask friends and family if they can spare a couple of hours to help you sort, pack or move.

As stressful as moving is, once you are sitting in your dream living room with your children playing and the dog is running around in the large garden you will sit back and realise that it was the best thing you have ever done.

After all you are doing this to give your family and yourself a better life...





Moving on Up

Moving into a new property can be a big adjustment for you and your family, but there are some things that can be done to make the process of settling in a little more comfortable. Here are some important things to remember once moved.

New address: Remember to tell those that need to know what your new address is. These places include, but are not limited to; friends, family, place of work, your bank, doctor's surgery, dentist, driver's licence and insurance, your children's school and utility companies. The same is true of your phone number – this will need updating with most places that require you to update your address.

Know your home: Take time to walk around your new house. This precious time, whether ten minutes or an hour, will offer you the time to really get a feel for your new home. Focus on what you love

about it; this will put you in a positive frame of mind once you start the seemingly never ending task of sorting your belongings.

Make your vision a reality: When you first looked at your new home, you will have imagined what it would look like with full paint, furniture and

accessories. The first few months of living in your new home is the perfect time to bring that vision to life. Decorate your home in the manner you imagined. You must make your home your own if you want to feel comfortable in it.



Sale of the month

Alison Wenham, negotiator from the Banbury office of Fisher German, highlights the story behind a recent sale success...



Hill Farm Cottage, Upper Boddington

Launched at the beginning of July with a guide price of £520,000, this charming detached stone cottage had been extensively renovated by the owners to a very high specification throughout. After attracting a good flurry of initial enquiries and viewings, a sale was quickly agreed to a young couple who had recently sold a flat in London and were looking for the dream move to the country, whilst also still regularly commuting to London. The property's links to the railway station and M40 were major factors in their purchase. Following agreement of the sale after a focused period of proactive sales progression a sale was finally concluded and the buyers can now start to enjoy their new life in the country!

To be put in touch with more London buyers please contact us for a no obligation market appraisal.

Contact Alison at alison.wenham@fishergerman.co.uk • 01295 271555 • fishergerman.co.uk



Stockton, Warwickshire



Substantial period house with outbuildings and land

- Ripe for updating
- Unique with many period features
- 4 reception rooms
- 12 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms
- Stable block, garage, outbuildings
- Gardens, paddock, about 5.64 acres
- Awaiting EPC rating

Guide price £1,200,000

15 offices selling across the UK

Banbury **01295 271555**



Westbury, Northamptonshire



Impeccably restored village house

- Impressive kitchen/breakfast room
- Double aspect drawing room, cellar
- 4 bedrooms (2 en suite), bathroom
- Study/5th bedroom
- Gardens, parking, about 0.24 acre
- EPC rating E

Guide price £775,000

Thorpe Mandeville, Northamptonshire



Individual detached property

- Recently modernised throughout
- Impressive sitting room and sun room
- Breakfast kitchen, dining room
- 4 double bedrooms (1 en-suite)
- Gardens and grounds of 0.379 acres
- EPC rating E

Guide price £650,000

15 offices selling across the UK

Banbury **01295 271555**



Litchborough, Northamptonshire



Impressive, stylish country house

- Superb kitchen/dining/living area
- Garden room, study, snug
- 4 double bedrooms with en-suites
- Large range of outbuildings, garage
- Lake, private and secluded gardens, paddocks, kitchen garden
- In all about 5.33 acres
- EPC rating E

Guide price £1,495,000





SOLD

Kineton, Warwickshire

Attractive small country estate comprising tradition farmhouse, 3 cottages, stabling & farm buildings set in 29 acres of land with far reaching countryside views (JSA).

SBK | SHELDON
BOSLEY
KNIGHT

SOLD STC
01608 661666
sheldonbosleyknight.co.uk



SOLD

Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

A unique block of 23.54 hectares (58.17 acres) of native mature semi-natural woodland near Stoneleigh, Warwickshire.

SOLD

Wellesbourne, Warwickshire

A substantial block of 221.18 acres (89.51 hectares) of arable, pasture and woodland with excellent road access, near Wellesbourne, Warwickshire.



LOOKING TO move TO pastures NEW IN 2017?

Our **experienced** rural sales team have acres of **expertise** to help you with your next move...

UNDER OFFER

Ditchford Hill, Moreton in Marsh

£925,000



SBK | SHELDON
BOSLEY
KNIGHT

FOR SALE
01608 661666
sheldonbosleyknight.co.uk

UNDER OFFER

Armscote, Warwickshire

£1,350,000



A well-appointed character country residence set in about 5.5 acres with stabling and paddock, enjoying outstanding views over the North Cotswolds Hills
EPC rating E (current) D (potential).



An outstanding stone built detached family residence with excellent two bedroom cottage and set in about 12 acres with stabling / outbuildings and enjoying superb countryside views
EPC rating E (current) D (potential).

Contact **Laura Gaydon**, Director, or **Philip Jones**, Associate Director
The Corner House, Market Place, Shipston-On-Stour, CV36 4AG Tel: **01608 661666**

Offices also at: Stratford upon Avon, Leamington Spa & Kenilworth



BOOTROOM BLISS

With autumn weather now upon us the need for a boot room becomes more apparent, as you try in vain to prevent muddy feet and paws from dirtying the carpets and floors of your home.

Designating an area just off the main kitchen, ideally near the back entrance, which incorporates storage and a cloakroom is the ideal placement for a boot room. Storage under bespoke seating that can hide away wellies, walking boots and trainers and hooks for coats and dog walking essentials will also prove a valuable addition to any boot room. This way you can make sure that you have everything you need easily accessible, such as a towel for drying off muddy children and paws.

For families whose focus is on outdoor pursuits, incorporating a boot room into your property will prove an invaluable asset to your home, particularly during the muddier seasons of autumn and winter.



above: Natural willow log and boot store by Ella James, £200

below: personalised 'walkies' dog lead hanger by Winning works, £32



from left: wellington boot pegs by Molly cupcakes, £2.10; his and hers cast iron boot rack by Dibor, £119; personalised boot room wooden sign by Delightful Living £28



One of thousands of items available at The Old Flight House

ANTIQUES | VINTAGE | INTERIORS

The Old Flight House

The Old Flight House is a refreshingly different antiques and interiors centre based in Oxfordshire and is home to over 70 dealers showcasing their ever-changing range of unique items for both home and garden. You will love what we have to offer and you can be sure of finding that special something with the help of our team of friendly and knowledgeable staff.

Our stylish and fully licensed cafe offers a mouthwatering menu of freshly prepared food and good coffee – all at reasonable prices.

We're easy to find too – just north of Oxford off the A34, five minutes from Bicester Village, between J9 and J10 on the M40. We're open every day from 10am - 5pm (11am - 5pm on Sundays). We look forward to offering you a warm welcome.

Weston-on-the-Green, Oxfordshire OX25 3TJ
theoldflightthouse.co.uk 01869 343441





embracing AUTUMN *in the home*



Autumn is that perfect time of year, where it is acceptable to cosy up in an oversized jumper or under a throw on your sofa whilst cradling a mug of hot chocolate, closing the curtains to shut out the colder weather, watching a roaring fire warm and light up your room. Many people love the warm rich colours of autumn, and whether its russet, deep rich red or brown, bringing the seasons colours into the home can only be a good thing. Here, we explore the season's best colours and how to fit them into your home décor, to bring a rich autumnal feel to your rooms.





RED

Deep rich red is a very popular colour as autumn approaches. It looks great in heavy curtains, ideal for keeping those rather cold breezes at bay, or as a throw on your sofa. In bedrooms, reds will add an opulent look, so utilise lampshades in this colour, or perhaps add red blankets to the bed, which will not only look great but offer extra warmth on the chilly autumn evenings.

GOLD

Gold leaves are a fantastic autumnal look and matching them with deep reds will work really well this season. Gold really should be used as an accent, and not a main colour, so look at gold accessories such as curtain tiebacks, or cushions rather than having a whole room painted in this colour.

BROWN

Many people disregard brown as a colour they want to use a lot of in their home, but combine it with any colour and it can make a great background for you to accent with golds, oranges and reds. Many people choose deep brown sofas, so adding a throw onto this can make it look very cosy. Also, brown is a great colour for rugs. Choose a nice thick one to last right through the winter and you'll be very surprised at how sophisticated a look it will make.

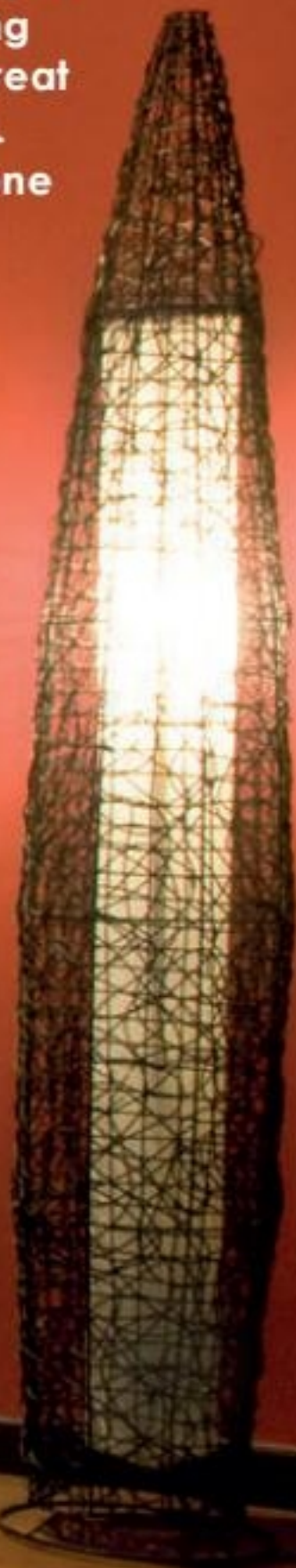
ORANGE

Orange can be a tricky colour to get right, however if you tone it down with rustic browns, then it's likely to be something that looks great in any room. Bedding is one

place that might make it easier for you to use orange in a good way, by getting orange cushions, you can brighten up darker bedding, or add a heavy throw on a sofa for a pop of autumn colour.

Accessorise with the brighter colours by choosing things like scented candles in a range of autumnal colours, or choose

some picture frames in oranges and browns. You could even go out on an autumnal walk and create your own pictures, by framing autumnal leaves to match your décor. Whatever your preference, bringing autumnal colours into your home will serve to make it look warmer, and lead you into the cooler months feeling cosy.



BANBURY WINDOWS & CONSERVATORIES LTD

DOORS
PVCU

WINDOWS

CONSERVATORIES
ALUMINIUM

ORANGERIES

BI-FOLDS
HARDWOOD



TO COMPLEMENT OUR FULL RANGE OF WINDOWS, DOORS & CONSERVATORIES, WE CAN NOW OFFER THE 'LIVING ROOM' ORANGERY AND THE BI-FOLD DOORS, AS SHOWN ABOVE AND IS AVAILABLE TO VIEW IN OUR EXTENSIVE SHOWROOM



Showroom at

17 Thorpe Place, Overthorpe Industrial Estate, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 4XH

Telephone 01295 270 404 Fax 01295 270 406

Email gray@banwindows.freeserve.co.uk Web www.banwin.co.uk



SHOW HOME STYLE

With the many new housing developments popping up across the *Four Shires* at the moment it is almost impossible not to want to wander around at least one of the fabulously decorated show homes. Often they are kitted out with everything you could possibly dream of, with not a paint stroke out of place. This look of perfection doesn't have to be reserved for the new builds however. By keeping a few simple things in mind when decorating your own home you too can embrace the look of the show home.



Add colour: By adding just a splash of colour to one or two walls, or by using coloured cupboards or doors, you can achieve a fun and vibrant look without it being too overpowering. This creates a timeless look, which will work well no matter the age of your property.

Light, bright and airy: People have changed the way that they live in recent years. Many now spend most of their time in their kitchen and dining area as opposed to the living room. By keeping these rooms light and airy, you will ensure that they flow nicely and accommodate this type of lifestyle perfectly.

Use a neutral base: An important thing to remember about interior design is that it's always changing, so if you are keen on the show home look there will be things that will always need updating after a few

years. Keep this in mind when adding decoration to your home. Maybe limit the use of colour to one wall and couple it with more neutral tones. It will then be easier to update your style as the trends change.



THE
KNOWLEDGE
WITHIN®

Brethertons^{LLP}
SOLICITORS

BEWARE OF PROPERTY FRAUD

By Harvey Gibbs, Brethertons LLP

Property fraud takes various forms for example, your identity can be stolen by a fraudster who sells your property and disappears with the sale proceeds. Some more sophisticated scams have fraudsters set up a bogus law firm office, carry out a fraudulent transaction then vanish with the sale funds.

Properties that are tenanted, vacant, free of mortgage or not registered with the Land Registry are at higher risk. Properties where elderly owners have been taken into hospital or care, or with overseas owners, may be particularly vulnerable.

Reputable solicitors now routinely carry out searches at the beginning of a conveyancing transaction to ensure that the firm acting for the other party is genuine.

You can also reduce the risk:

- Register your property with the Land Registry
- Register your contact details with the Land Registry
- Follow the Land Registry's protection advice

Contact Brethertons Conveyancing Team on 01295 270999 for a quotation you can trust.

Quick • Reliable • Service driven • Local



Brethertons^{LLP}
SOLICITORS

Buying or selling your home?

Contact our friendly and professional Conveyancing team.

Saturdays 9.00am-12.30pm
Monday-Friday 8.30am-5.30pm
No appointment necessary

For further information please contact:

Harvey Gibbs
harveygibbs@brethertons.co.uk
01295 270999



THE KNOWLEDGE WITHIN®

www.brethertons.co.uk



BARN FARM PLANTS CHARITY CHRISTMAS EVENING

Barn Farm Plants in Wardington will be holding their annual charity Christmas evening this month. The event takes place on the 29th November between 6.30pm and 8.30pm and will be in aid of two fantastic local charities,

Katharine House Hospice and Dogs for Good, both of which provide essential services to those in the *Four Shires* area.

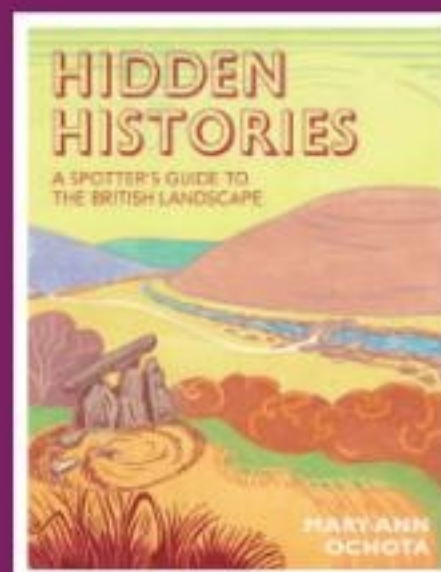
The event will offer visitors the chance to enjoy a festive evening, which will include many special offers that will be available for one night only! This will be accompanied by a selection of gift stalls, tombola, a cake stall and, not forgetting, a visit from Father Christmas himself.

Entry is £2 and children under 16 get in for free, with all proceeds split between the two charities. This is an evening not to miss!

GARDENING BOOK OF THE MONTH

Hidden Histories: A Spotters Guide to The British Landscape

This is a great new book by Mary-Ann Ochota and published by Frances Lincoln. Have you ever been driving through the countryside and wondered what the strange mounds are or why the road is so straight in some parts of the country? With this new spotter's guide you



will be able to answer all of these questions and more. This is a great book to keep in the car ready for all those family days out and holidays. It is packed full of great illustrations that bring the books text to life.

ISBN: 9780711236929

Christmas Festival & TOY FAIR



- Father Christmas at 6pm
- Gifts for all the family
- Pedal tractor test track



EVENT TIMES
4.30 - 7.00pm

FAROL
LIMITED

A Family Business Est. 1976

www.farol.co.uk

Whilst stocks last. Prices include VAT

TUESDAY 6TH DECEMBER

Boddington Road, Byfield, Daventry, Northamptonshire, NN11 6FL

WEDNESDAY 7TH DECEMBER

Rycote Lane Farm, Milton Common, Thame, Oxfordshire, OX9 2NZ

☎ 01327 264844

✉ info@farol.co.uk

☎ 01844 278843

✉ info@farol.co.uk





our COUNTRY gardens



with david williams

NOVEMBER IN THE GARDEN

This month the leaves will be falling thick and fast so sweeping them up will become a daily job ensuring that they don't get too thick on the ground. Remember that all of the leaves you pick up will make great leaf mold that you will be able to use throughout the garden next year. This really is one of the best types of composts. It is essential that you turn your leaf mold at least a couple of times a year.

November is the best month to plant out your tulips. It is best to plant these at twice the depth of the bulb if you are on clay soil or if your soil does not drain freely. Make sure you put an inch or two of horticultural grit at the bottom of the hole to add some drainage. Tulips are great planted on mass or just dotted through your borders.

It is still not too late to plant out other bulbs such as daffodils and hyacinths. They will just flower a bit later which can be an advantage as it will extend the season.

If you have any dahlias in the garden it is advised that you start lifting them to store them over winter. Cut them down to about 6 inches (15cm) then dig them out of the ground and lay them on the greenhouse bench to dry out. Once dry remove all the excess soil and pack into boxes of dry compost or wood shavings and store in a cool, dry, frost free place remembering to label what they are.

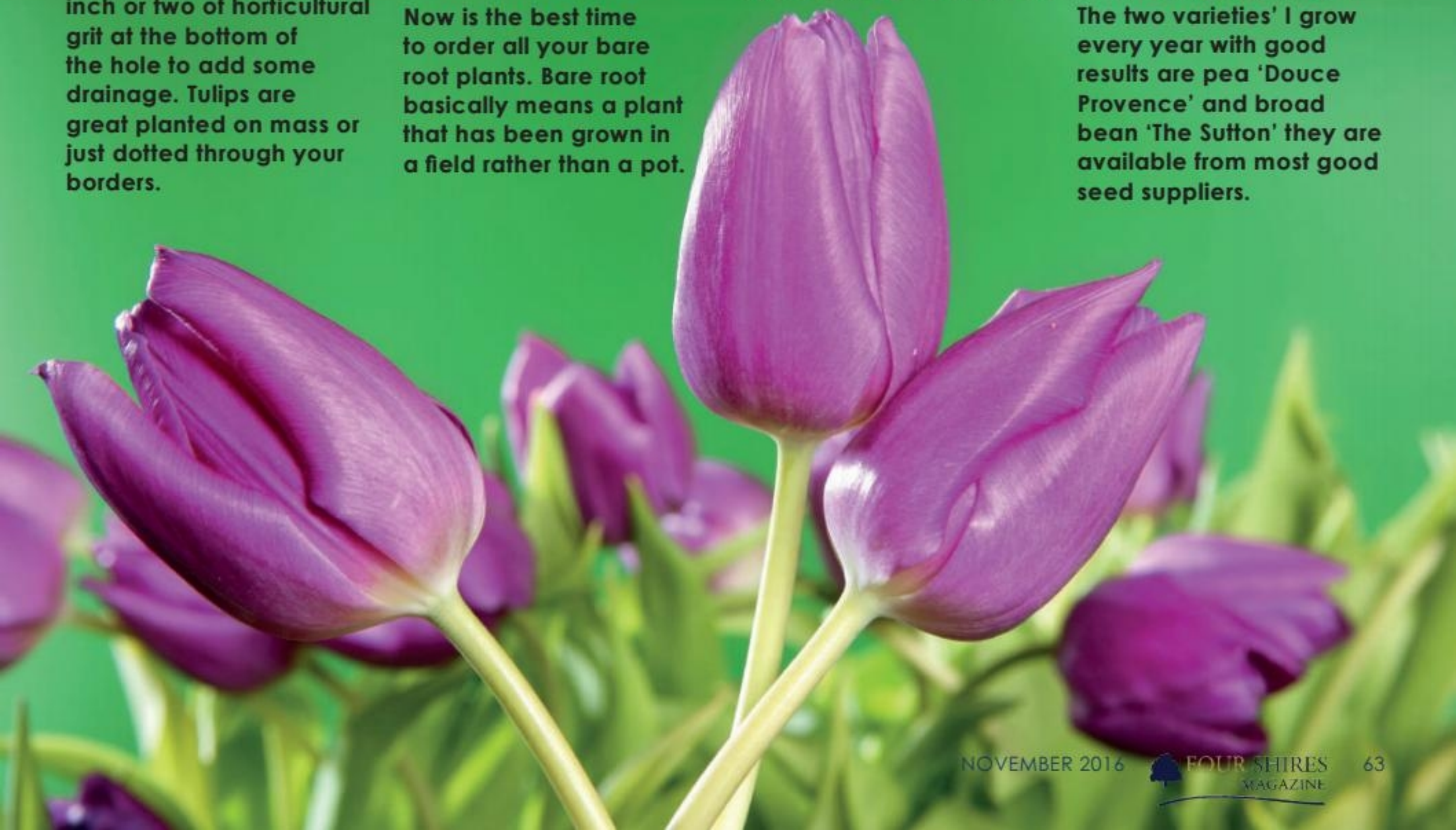
Now is the best time to order all your bare root plants. Bare root basically means a plant that has been grown in a field rather than a pot.

Roses and hedging are the most popular plants to be bought bare root but fruit, shrubs, trees and even perennials can all be bought bare root. Whatever you buy however, make sure you plant them out as soon as possible after taking delivery. You never want to let the roots dry out so keep them moist.

November is also a great time to plant out garlic bulbs. Plant them about 3-5cm deep and 15cm apart in well prepared soil.

A good new variety of garlic is 'Bohemian Rose'. It comes from north of Bohemia, near to Prague. This garlic offers light purple cloves and leaves that can grow up to 1m tall. The bulbs also have a good flavour.

If you want really early broad beans and peas then you can also plant them now. Although if you are on soil that becomes water logged over the winter it is worth waiting until the spring or start them off in pots instead. The two varieties I grow every year with good results are pea 'Douce Provence' and broad bean 'The Sutton' they are available from most good seed suppliers.





NATIONAL HERB CENTRE NATURE TRAIL AND GARDENS

Situated just a stone's throw away from Banbury, at the top of Warmington Hill, you will find the fantastic National Herb Centre which is perfect for an autumnal walk with your family.

You can follow the nature trail as it winds down through a valley amongst fields, past ponds and into woodland with the opportunity to view three separate counties; Oxfordshire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire.

There are three routes to choose from so even little legs can enjoy a stroll, as time to complete each trail ranges from 25 minutes to approximately an hour.



These trails offer you the chance to see all kinds of wildlife in its natural habitat including rabbits, foxes, badgers, bats, buzzards, partridge, a variety of deer or even a white stag, as well as seeing native trees and wild flowers.

A guide to the trail and what to look out for is available in the shop.

Christmas Starts here... You'll find plenty of decorations & gifts!



**Christmas
Charity Evening**
Tues 29th November
6.30pm-8.30pm £2 Entry

In aid of Katharine
House Hospice & Dogs
for Good



**Barn Farm Plants
Garden Centre**

Upper Wardington
Banbury, Oxon, OX17 1SN

01295 758080

www.barnfarmplants.co.uk

Open seven days a week



It is often said that trouble comes in threes! The expensive aggravation at the moment is three bust radiators: the 16 year old John Deere 3050 'yard' tractor blew its cooling system during harvest, this was followed by the three year old New Holland T7 blowing steam in the middle of cultivations for next year's harvest and the final straw came when the old man's personal farm transport, a Kubota 900 ATV decided to follow suit!

In the good old days this meant a quick dash into A1 radiators for a repair job, but with modern technology it's "sorry mate, we can't do anything with that, it's plastic", so it's on to E-bay to find a replacement with next day delivery, Ho hum.

After an 'away day' the Mule flock replacements arrived home safely from the Lazonby sheep sales

and after 48 hours of TLC in the sheep barns with extra hay and cake, they went out into the isolation paddocks (this is part of animal movement regulations) before joining the main flock, these are all "Ewe Lambs" and will lamb in April.

It seems as if the 'compilers' of the *State of Nature 2016* paper are upping their bid for a slice of the 'repatriated' Common Agriculture Policy funds by claiming that 50% of UK wildlife species are in decline. They also claim that over 70% of the land use in this country is for agriculture "which is having an overwhelming effect on biodiversity". What these well fed members of our academic society need to remember is that farmers feed people and that 'rewilding' will reduce the amount of food production land and this will increase food imports. These imports

BRUCE HOPKINS LTD

**Domestic & Commercial
Groundcare Machinery**



Sales, Service, Spare Parts



HONDA
The Power of Dreams



Shenington Airfield Tel: 01295 680711

Jeff Deane 07860 742701

www.brucehopkins.co.uk





will be grown using the Agro technology which has been banned in this country!

The aforementioned report has come down very much against the farming community, with no mention of how the Government its environmental organisations have contributed to the decline of our wildlife species.

I have been, for the last 40 years, involved in many different environmental projects on the land that I farm and it is now very evident that all I have achieved is to provide a very well stocked "fast food" restaurant for the ever increasing numbers of protected raptors out there.

I have just completed as required by (Natural England) the 'topping' of the tussock grass on our breeding wader project meadow land and at any one time had up to 18 buzzards and kites mopping up anything that moved!

This year all of our RSPB curlew monitored nesting sites were predated by protected badgers who also took care of a number of wild bee's nests and shredded a large number of my honey bee hives. Yet it seems as a farmer I am responsible for the

decline of our farm wildlife!

We are approaching Halloween and it seems that the decline in the number of toads is also being put down to modern agriculture as most of the field ponds have been drained and filled in. This may be true, but during previous decades the government's drive to eradicate Bovine TB meant these ponds were drained as they were considered to be a source of infection, as both cattle and badgers drank from them!

Another more subtle reason for the demise of the field pond was the fact that all farms had their own water supplies from springs, wells and bore holes. As the then government owned water companies (remember them) spread out the national 'mains' water pipe network, inspectors had the power to shut down 'on farm' water supplies and remove the

farm's licence to produce milk. Another reason for the demise of the field pond was the warble fly or *gadfly* - a particularly nasty beast that frequented field ponds and laid its eggs on

COUNTRYMAN

George Fenemore lets off steam and tackles a few vital home repairs

the legs of cattle as they went to drink. Without going into much gory detail, the warble fly grub ended up along the spine of the infected animal making a breathing hole through the skin before emerging to drop off and pupate in the soil. This rendered the hide of no use for the leather trade, so the government set to work on a warble fly eradication program. Legislation compelled all cattle to be treated with organophosphate compounds - something that may well have kicked off BSE (mad cow disease) as it was applied along the spine. This, along with sheep dipping had to be monitored and

documented by the local

constabulary. However, the last time the local law came to inspect the sheep dipping at Home Farm they got their vehicle stuck on the farm track and the subsequent tow removed their exhaust system - they never came back.

Recently, I was delighted to see a family of six hedgehogs foraging the grass banks in the farmyard but horrified to find all six of them had been rolled into the tarmac the next morning by the Clifton 'rat runners', but still that's life and you could always blame the local farmer!

Perhaps I should have picked them up and moved them well away from the road, but then perhaps old Mr Brock would have had an easy meal...

Ho hum, up the revolution!





CREATE A Wildlife Friendly Garden THIS AUTUMN

Often, autumn in the garden can be seen as a time when everything is decaying and dying back, but just as the plants start to die back, much of the wildlife will be looking for extra food and shelter as the weather turns from warm and sunny to cold and wet. Here are a few ideas to help out your local wildlife during the colder months



CREATE A HEDGEHOG HIGHWAY AND CONNECT WITH YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Autumn is a busy time of year for a lot of wildlife as they prepare for the cooler months, and hedgehogs are no exception as they start planning for hibernation.

By creating a hedgehog highway and making a safe 'corridor' in your fence for the little animals to move through, it's a great way to connect with your neighbours and give nature a home at the same time.

The hole in the fence will help to protect the hedgehogs, which walk up to a mile a night, from other animals and help them find the perfect spot to hibernate.

FN PILE & SONS

AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICULTURAL ENGINEERS, SALES AND SERVICE

STOVAX



Stovax Solid Fuel Stoves

STIHL

APPROVED DEALER

VIKING



Stihl and Viking Cordless Power System

AGA

CAST IRON STOVES



AGA Cast Iron Stoves

ASPEN

Fuel for professionals



Aspen Alkylate Petrol

YAMAHA



Yamaha YFZ50 & YFM90R Small In Size, Big In Fun

CALOR

MORRIS
LUBRICANTS



Calor Gas



Morris Oils

(Collection Only) & lubricants

FIR TREE FARM, WARMINGTON, BANBURY, OX17 1JL TEL:01295 211790 MON - FRI 8.00 - 5.00 SAT: 8.30 - 12noon WWW.FNPILE.CO.UK



OPEN UP YOUR VERY OWN BIRD CAFÉ

A fantastic way to invite wildlife into your garden is by opening up a bird café to attract all kinds of colourful feathered friends. You can do this easily by investing in a bird feeder or a roofed bird table and getting a mixture of seeds, fruits, nuts and oats to put in them. Different types of birds prefer different types of food, so if you're looking to have variety in your garden, be sure to pick up an assortment of bird food.

MAKE A BUTTERFLY BANQUET FROM YOUR LEFTOVERS

Autumn butterflies like red admirals, painted ladies and comma butterflies require sugary treats

every so often this season so you can help by putting mushy bananas in a sheltered, high place in the garden for them to enjoy.

CREATE A SAFE HIDEAWAY BY BUILDING A WILDLIFE HOTEL

As we move out of summer and the colder weather draws in, more ambitious gardeners might want to try building a safe hideaway for bugs and creepy crawlies to live in. Build a stable



structure out of a couple of old wooden pallets. Using plant pots, straw, old roof tiles, sticks and logs, you can provide many different holes, spaces, tunnels and cosy beds for all types of wildlife to climb into to keep them safe.

GIVE BEES A BANQUET

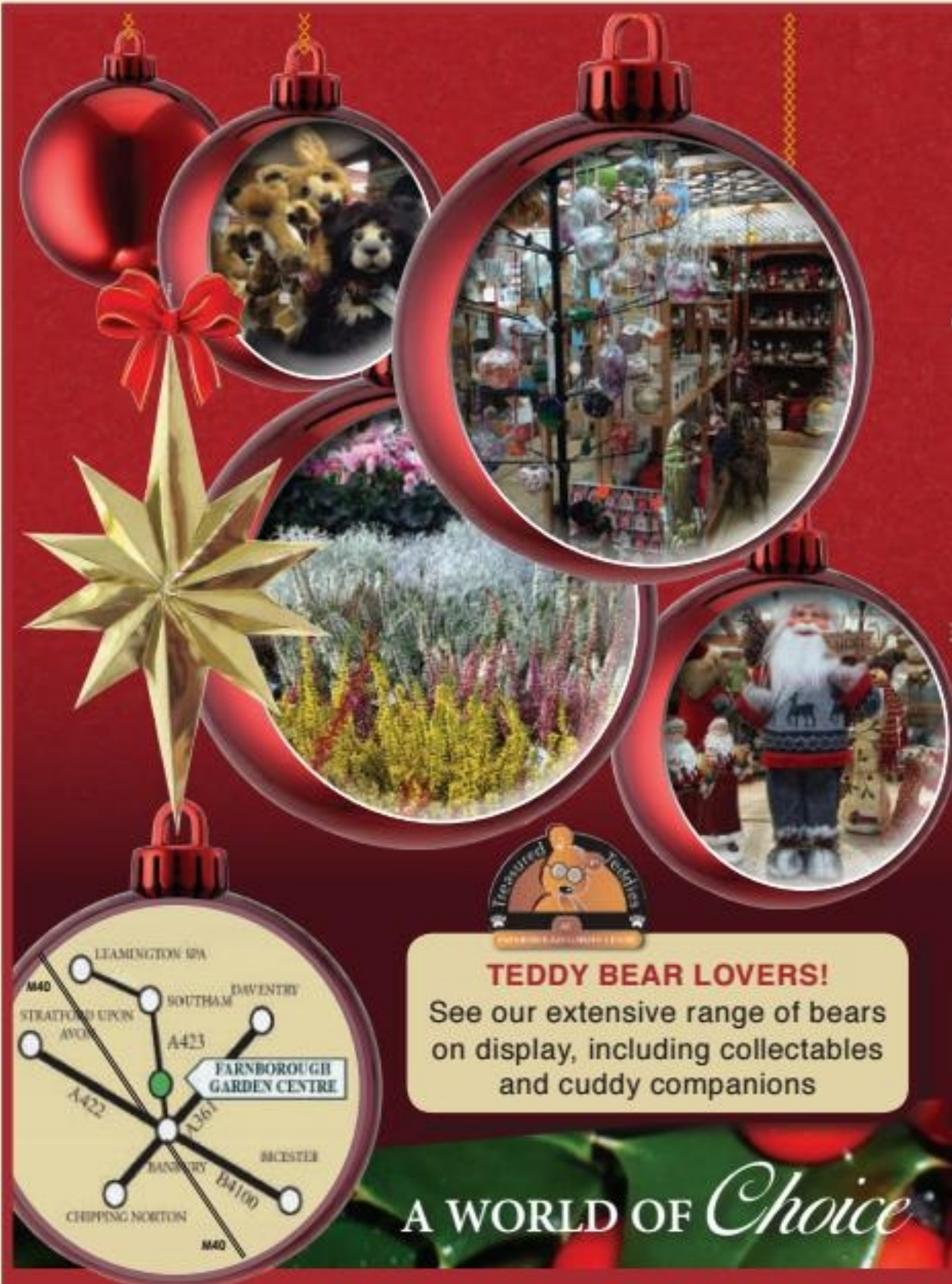
Provide bees with a banquet, whilst providing a dense cover for other creatures by sowing a poppy patch. By having poppies in your garden, you'll be providing a feeding ground for the now endangered bee population.



Christmas Homes and Gardens at the Garden Lovers Garden Centre

- * Christmas Gifts *
- * Artisan Glassware *
- * Autumn Bedding Plants *
- * Wild Bird Care *
- * Christmas Trees Available - late November *

Open six days a week. Tues-Sat: 9am-5pm * Sun: 10.30am-4.30pm
on A423 Southam Road, nr Farnborough, Banbury OX17 1EL
01295 690479



TEDDY BEAR LOVERS!

See our extensive range of bears on display, including collectables and cuddly companions

A WORLD OF *Choice*

WHERE THINGS FOR YOUR GARDEN WON'T COST THE EARTH



Harefurlong Nurseries

www.farnboroughgardencentre.co.uk



ALCAN WALKERS

We are indebted to June Sibthorpe of Bodicote for popping into the office with these super pictures. They date back from the early 1960s and show employees at the Alcan factory – based on the Southam Road in Banbury.

June recalls that the pictures featuring the ladies in walking gear show the night they walked from Stratford upon Avon to Banbury. They did this as part of a bet, for the chap in the centre of the picture thought the girls wouldn't be able to make it.... of course they did!



If you have any information about the pictures on these pages we would love to hear from you. Please email Cathy Black: cathy@fourshires.co.uk



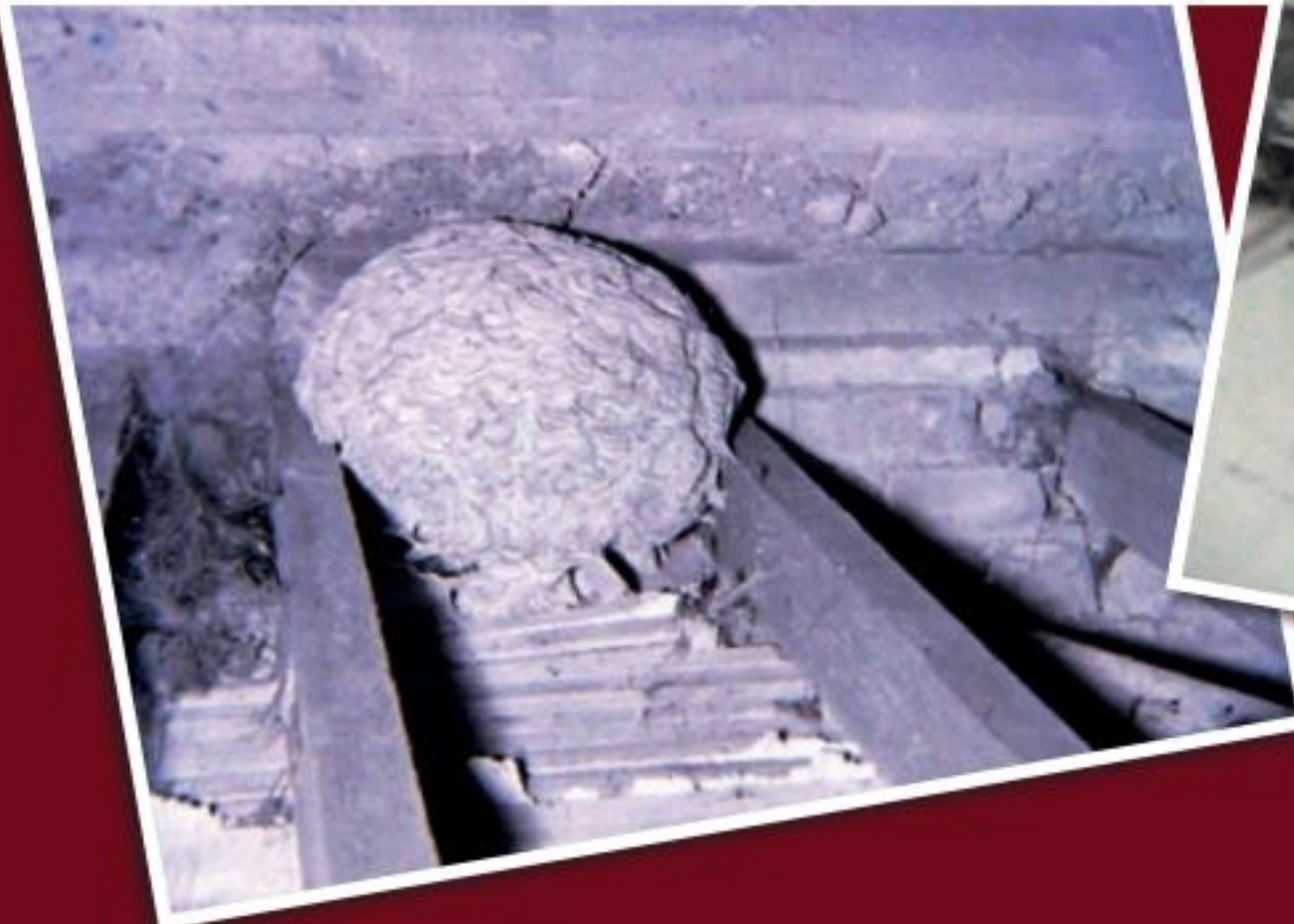
FOUR PICTURES FROM 1970...

The first picture (right) is of a demolition somewhere in Banbury, with people working in the old building. We suspect there are regulations governing this type of thing today! We cannot identify where this old building was, can you?

The picture of the wasps' nest (bottom left) could really be from any time in the past although it does look quite large. We wonder which brave soul took this on?

The picture of the two fire brigade officers (below) was probably taken in Cope Road in Banbury – where the fire service is still based to this day. We wonder what the two gentleman in the picture had done.

Our seasons all seem to meld into one nowadays, but this last picture shows a Banbury market place under cover of snow! We wonder whether there will be a scattering this year...



from HALLOWEEN to HOGWARTS...

pumpkins reign supreme

with maggie chaplin



detail. The chances are that the enthusiastic sculpting will involve throwing the excavated contents onto the compost heap, followed a couple of weeks later by the now collapsing lantern.

Although there's a long tradition in Britain of carving crude faces from vegetables, particularly at Halloween, pumpkins are a relatively recent addition to the repertoire. Turnips, swedes or mangelwurzels, were the natural choice until pumpkins became readily available. Turnip heads are less colourful and much more difficult to hollow out, and although once common have been superceded by the big orange pumpkins that appear in garden centres and supermarkets in their hundreds in October. But there's a lot more to pumpkins than this brief moment of ritual glory.

Pumpkins are native to the Americas, and a type of pumpkin seed that can be dated to around 6,000 BC has been found in Mexico. The word pumpkin derives from the Greek word *pepon*, meaning 'large melon', and whereas pumpkins do belong to the same family as

melons, cucumbers, and marrows, unlike them they mature in the autumn and are often referred to as winter squashes. Although in Britain we're relatively new to using squash as a vegetable, in many other parts of the world winter squash, such as butternut squash, has been a highly prized food source for thousands of years. It has the tremendous advantage that until opened it will keep for several months. Before the advent of fridges and freezers this was a very valuable asset.

For culinary use, pumpkin flesh is very versatile, largely because it doesn't have very distinctive qualities of its own (it contains 92% water) and so can form the basis of sweet or savoury dishes. To make traditional pumpkin pie, spices, eggs, sugar and usually cream are added and for savoury dishes, herbs and sauces are used to add flavour to an otherwise rather bland vegetable. Raw pumpkin provides fibre, is an excellent source of vitamin A and provitamin A, and contains a moderate amount of vitamin C, but has no significant content of other nutrients. Perhaps

Phew! The "Trick or Treat" season is over for another year and all the ghosts ghouls and zombies have gone back to earth, or wherever they go back to after Halloween, but you may still have a big orange pumpkin with enormous empty eye sockets and an evil jagged-toothed grin sitting on your doorstep.

For most of us in the UK these giant winter squashes are synonymous with October 31st and we only think of them in terms of being a chance to exercise our creative skills and carve them into wicked-looking caricatures of a human face. We aim to make them appear even more menacing by hollowing them out and putting a flickering candle inside.

The process involves a lot of gouging and slicing and sometimes swearing. Pumpkin flesh in the hands of an amateur, doesn't lend itself to precision and fine

this lack of individual character explains why most of us discard the centre of our Halloween carving, and, after all, the contents of a large pumpkin would make an overwhelming amount of pumpkin pie. If you happen to be one of those for whom autumn isn't autumn without a helping of this traditional pudding, you can always take the easy route and buy a can of pre-prepared pumpkin puree to make your dessert.

The seeds of the pumpkin, however, are highly nutritious – and tasty! They're flat, light green, and about 1cm long and can be bought with or without their white husk, either raw or roasted, to eat as a snack. They are often sold as pepitas and when hulled they make a useful addition to salads or they can be incorporated into bread. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of protein, magnesium, copper and zinc and for centuries have been prized

for their food value wherever in the world winter squashes have been grown. Today China is the chief supplier and pepitas are widely available in health food stores and supermarkets all year round.

You may want to have a go at growing your own pumpkins – probably only practicable if you have a large garden or an allotment.

They're gross feeders and need rich soil, and regular doses of fertilizer. Pumpkins are also heavy drinkers. You don't get to be that big and consist of 92% water without having a prodigious thirst, and the giant varieties can take up a lot of space – up to twenty square feet per plant. They're also frost sensitive and need from 75 to 100 frost free days to mature. To produce good quality, healthy pumpkins you need to give them lots of TLC, and as commercially produced ones are so readily and cheaply available it's probably not worth it, apart from the tremendous buzz of growing your own. If you're a fan of weird shaped vegetables, though, then there is an advantage to tending your own pumpkin patch. You can apparently persuade a young growing pumpkin to adopt a controlled form by carefully placing a cage-like mould around it that you cut



off when it's fully grown. Currently, limited quantities of square ones have been successfully produced commercially.

One man in the north of England, however, has made a business out of devoting his allotment to growing pumpkins, which he then turns into intricate carvings. As well as making traditional spooky Halloween lanterns, he expertly produces very recognizable representations of animals, fictional characters and celebrity faces and he'll even sell you a kit to have a go yourself!

Celebration of Halloween has become very popular over the last thirty years or so, which is reflected in the widespread sale every autumn of all things spooky. Not just witches hats, glow-in-the-dark ghoulish masks, vampire teeth and fancy dress, but all





manner of scary house decorations involving spiders, cobwebs and skulls, as well as Halloween themed confectionery and what are described as “gross” recipes to make your own seasonal party fare. Sales of pumpkins have rocketed too.

Forty years ago a few vegetable farmers were growing a small number of pumpkins alongside their other crops. Now pumpkins are big business and in some cases have taken over as the main produce. Specialist British pumpkin farmers have developed their expertise in growing what can be a tricky crop in this country and today millions of pumpkins are grown annually in the UK. Some growers go mainly for size, and of course there are giant pumpkin competitions – with weights approaching 1 tonne being recorded. Commercial producers aim for a more practical maximum

size of around 6kg for Halloween and also grow much smaller, thicker fleshed varieties for culinary use. On a smaller scale, many farm shops also grow their own pumpkins for sale.

Although it's only in the last thirty years or so that pumpkins have been widely available in Europe, these big bright orange vegetables have captured children's imaginations for centuries, even if most of them had never seen a real one. This pumpkin awareness is probably largely thanks to a Frenchman, Charles Perrault, who, in 1697 wrote down folk stories that had previously only been retold orally. Perrault was the author of many of our familiar fairy tales, and it was he who introduced the fairy godmother, the glass slippers and the pumpkin into the Cinderella story. He was, as you might guess, the son of a wealthy family, because it's doubtful if in 17th century France a poor girl would be able, as instructed by her fairy godmother, to go and pick a golden pumpkin from her garden to be transformed into a coach, but it's an enchanting image.

Pumpkins have a more modern involvement in fairy stories, or should that be wizard stories? A popular beverage at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry is apparently pumpkin juice, which is consumed at breakfast, lunch and pretty much any occasion. So next year, when you buy a pumpkin to carve into an evil face to frighten the neighbours on Halloween,

you might, instead of throwing the pumpkin pulp onto the compost heap, consider joining the Harry Potter set and make it into juice.

Or maybe not. Just as it's necessary to add cloves, cinnamon and ginger to spice up your pumpkin pie to make it tasty, you'll have to put a few extras in your pumpkin juice to give it flavour. Official Harry Potter pumpkin juice, which is supplied in bottles with orange pumpkin-shaped caps, is available from the Universal Orlando Merchandise store. The ingredients are listed as follows:

Water, apple juice concentrate, pumpkin puree, apricot puree, sugar, natural and artificial flavours, citric acid, acesulfame potassium, sodium benzoate.

Not just pumpkin then?

We British have embraced all things pumpkin with enthusiasm, and they're a colourful and fun addition to our culture, but at a practical level, maybe just stick to the carving, and leave it at that? 🍂

Many thanks to Pukka Pumpkins for their carved pumpkin pictures





Christmas dinner must be one of life's most stressful meals to prepare, so starting the process in advance will certainly help to take the pressure off. Here are the Christmas foods you could be prepping right now.

GRAVY

Christmas dinner just wouldn't be Christmas dinner without a good gravy. A decent stock can be the saviour of dry turkey and soggy sprouts and it's easy to freeze and reheat on the day.

Giblet stock can be made quickly by simmering poultry giblets (neck, heart, gizzard and liver) in water with onions and carrots for about 30 minutes. Then discard the solids and retain the liquid to make your gravy, preferably on a day you're having a Sunday roast. You can then use the fat from your meat, a little flour, some red wine and your stock to make your Christmas gravy and pop it in the freezer.



ROAST POTATOES

Perhaps this is a bit surprising but it's definitely possible to prepare your potatoes way before the big day. Parboil and freeze your potatoes to give your roasties a head start. Make sure the potatoes are completely cool before

freezing. You can even half-roast them for about half an hour in advance, or until they are a pale gold colour, meaning they'll only need re-roasting for 20 minutes in a hot oven.

GET AHEAD FOR CHRISTMAS

CRANBERRY SAUCE

Tip 100g of muscovado sugar and 100ml of orange juice into a pan, then bring to the boil. Stir in 250g of cranberries, then simmer until tender but still holding their shape. The sauce will thicken as it cools. It will keep in the fridge for a week but will also freeze really well. Defrost on the day and simply warm it through.



The team at Brackley Butchers are delighted to offer Aberdeen Angus Ribs, Sirloin Steaks as well as other popular cuts to their customers, the cattle are reared locally at Newbottle Estate under the highest welfare standards.

Lamb is supplied by Purston Manor and Pork from Little Hill Farm Wicken.

We offer beautifully succulent Derehams Traditional Turkeys reared on a traditional family farm with room to roam across meadows. We also supply award winning Geese from Peachcroft Farm where the welfare of the Geese is of paramount importance.

Christmas Hampers
Free delivery to your doorstep within a five mile radius.
£20 minimum deposit required.
All weights are approximate.



Turkey Hamper 6 - 8 People



1x - Fresh Turkey - 5kg+
1x - Prime English Topside Beef - 1.7 - 2.0kg
1x - Plain Gammon - 2.2kg +
1lb - Streaky Bacon Plain
1.5lbs - Chipolata Sausages
1lb - Dry Cured Back Bacon Plain
1lb - Sausage Meat
12 Local Free Range Eggs
Cranberry Sauce
Sage & Onion Stuffing

Free - 2lb Pork Pie & Jar of Goose Fat

£119 per Hamper



Crown Hamper 6 - 8 People



1x - Fresh Turkey Crown - 2.9kg+
1x - Prime English Topside Beef - 1.7kg - 2.0kg
1x - Plain Gammon - 2.2kg+
1lb - Streaky Bacon Plain
1.5lbs - Chipolata Sausages
1lb - Dry Cured Back Bacon
1lb - Sausage Meat
6 Local Free Range Eggs
Cranberry Sauce
Sage & Onion Stuffing

Free - 2lb Pork Pie & Jar of Goose Fat

£99 per Hamper



a FESTIVE *feast*

One of the best things about the festive season has to be the food! It is truly great fun preparing and feasting on all the delicious dishes we don't tend to eat all year, enjoyed in a cosy home with warming mulled wine and Christmas aromas.

One of my particular favourites is the whole, triple smoked, roasted gammon, that I cook every year on the bone with a wonderful glaze, writes *Caroline Jaques*. It takes several hours to cook, which means that there is a heavenly smell throughout the house all day, a warmth in the air that is second to none and, best of all, it requires almost no work, so there's plenty of time to wile away the hours watching old films with a nice glass of red!

I love to throw a house party and serve this to all my closest friends. They all know it's coming and they now expect it every year, there would be mutiny if the 'giant ham' did not make an appearance! It's served as part of a big buffet lunch including mini jacket potatoes, salads and French bread, a big cheeseboard and deliciously spiced pears and home made chutneys.



SWEET MUSTARD HAM

What you'll need:

9-11lb raw triple smoked gammon on the bone - ask your butcher
3oz soft brown sugar
6 tbsp wholegrain mustard
2 large oranges
Plenty of cloves

What to do:

Ask your butcher when you buy your gammon whether it requires soaking. If it does, place the raw ham in a large, clean, plastic washing up bowl. I once had one that was so large it wouldn't fit in the bowl so I had to improvise and decided in my infinite

wisdom to soak it in the bath - it wasn't the nicest cleaning job afterwards (you have been warned)! Add enough water to cover the meat and soak it overnight.

Remove all but the bottom shelf from your oven, you will need the space. Heat the oven to 160°C and calculate your cooking time, 20 minutes per lb.

Take the largest roasting tin you have and two long lengths of foil. You're going to make a tent with this, so the foil will almost take over your kitchen - don't worry, it will all come together! Put one length of foil





across the roasting tin, then another length in the opposite direction. Pat your gammon dry with some kitchen towel, then place it on the foil. Cut the oranges into quarters and throw them in as well - they give a fantastic flavour. Loosely create a sealed tent with the foil, making sure that your meat is completely enveloped, but leaving lots of air within the tent - so your gammon will almost be steaming inside it's foil enclosure.

Put this in the oven and walk away. Do not look at it again and trust that it will be fine. Do not be tempted to open the foil parcel to 'check it'! Do be tempted to open a bottle of wine and watch a movie or two, get together with a friend, or go out to do some Christmas shopping. Do anything so that you're not watching the meat cook!

Set an alarm for half an hour before the end of the cooking time - now you can take the meat out and open the foil parcel. Cut away the excess foil to expose the meat (keep the foil, you'll need it later).

Now you need to be armed with oven gloves and a very sharp knife. Carefully, peel off all the skin, leaving as much of the underlying fat as possible. Then score the fat with criss-cross cuts, making a diamond pattern. Stud a clove into the centre of each diamond shape, then smother the mustard all over. Finally sprinkle the sugar all over and press it in with your hands. Increase the oven temperature to

220°C, put the uncovered ham back in the oven and leave for about 30 minute until it's golden and crunchy all over. Remove it from the oven, transfer to a large plate and invite the whole family in to marvel at your cleverness!

Allow to cool, then use the foil to cover it until you're ready for the grand unveiling. If you're serving this for a party, cook it a couple of days ahead.

SPICED PICKLED PEARS

What you'll need:

2 lb small hard pears
350g soft brown sugar
250ml white wine vinegar
250ml cider vinegar
2 cinnamon sticks
1 lemon, thinly sliced
1 tsp whole cloves
1 tsp juniper berries
2 tsp mixed pepper berries

What to do:

Put everything except the pears in a big saucepan over a low heat and bring slowly to the boil. Make sure all the sugar has dissolved. Peel the pears, but leave the stalks on. Drop them into cold water as you go. When they are all peeled, take them out of the water and add to the juices in the pan. Simmer for 20 minutes, then remove the pears and put them into a jar. Reduce the remaining liquid by half and pour

over the pears making sure they are completely covered and add any stray 'bits' too.

Seal the jar and allow to cool. You can make this up to a month ahead.

QUICK AND EASY TOMATO CHUTNEY

What you'll need:

1kg tomatoes, peeled and chopped
750g cooking apples, peeled, cored and chopped
375g light brown sugar
250g onions, chopped
1 green pepper, deseeded and chopped
2 tsp salt
½ tsp ground ginger
350ml cider vinegar

What to do:

Put all the ingredients into a large pan and bring to the boil over a medium heat. Stir occasionally until all the sugar has



dissolved. Boil the mixture, uncovered, for about 45-50 mins until the fruit is tender and thickened. Cool, then transfer the mixture to a sterilised jar and seal. It's as easy as that!





THE WYKHAM ARMS
SIBFORD GOWER
www.wykhamarms.co.uk

Come and celebrate Christmas in style at
The Wykham Arms, Sibford Gower



Voted in Alistair Sawday's top 50 favourite pubs

Christmas fayre menu now available. Come and hold your Christmas party with us, please call for details.

Bank holiday Mon 26th - Tues 27th December, Excellent value brunch menu available. Please book early as this is very popular.

The Wykham Arms | Sibford Gower | Banbury | Oxfordshire
Tel 01295 788808
Come visit our new website!
Web: www.wykhamarms.co.uk Email: contact@wykhamarms.co.uk



WINTER WARMERS

There's definitely a chill in the air, so what better than to reintroduce the family to a simple yet comforting pot roast. Easy to prepare and slow cooked for maximum flavour, this recipe offers a twist on the usual ingredients, adding Dijon mustard, balsamic vinegar and maple syrup for a deliciously sticky, sweet finish. Mmm!

SLOW COOKER MAPLE & DIJON POT ROAST

Serves 4 to 6

What you'll need:

About 3 lbs beef chuck/
braising steak in a single
piece
5 slices smoked bacon,
diced
3 onions, peeled and cut
into chunks
1/2 Pint of chicken stock
2 tbsp Dijon mustard
2 tbsp maple syrup
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
2 tsp paprika
Salt and freshly ground
black pepper, to taste

What to do:

Dry the beef with paper
towels and season with
salt and pepper.

Put the bacon in a hot,
deep frying pan and

cook until it begins to turn
brown. Push the bacon
to the sides and add the
beef. Sear both sides
until golden brown, then
transfer all the meat to
the bowl of a slow cooker
or a deep casserole dish.

Add the onions to the
frying pan and cook until
starting to soften, then
pour in a few tablespoons
of chicken stock and
bring to a boil, scraping
up any of the brown
bits from the bottom of
the pan. Pour all of this
into the slow cooker or
casserole dish.

Mix together the
remaining chicken stock,
Dijon, balsamic vinegar,
maple syrup, paprika, and
some salt and pepper in a
bowl and pour it over the
roast. Close the lid and
cook on low heat until the
meat falls apart - about 8
hours.

Transfer the roast to a
serving bowl or platter
and cover with foil. Pour
the cooking liquids into
large saucepan and
bring to a boil. Cook until
the gravy is reduced to
desired thickness. Cut
the roast into chunks
and pour hot gravy over
the top. Serve with oven
roasted potatoes and
carrots, fresh mixed green
vegetables sprinkled with
almonds and a delicious
bottle of Chianti.



THE
MEAT
JOINT

Quality Pork & Lamb



CHRISTMAS FARE FROM THE MEAT JOINT

Christmas is on the way and we are again offering delicious geese and turkeys from Peach Croft Farm along with cockerels, ducks, turkey crowns, Royal Roast and all the trimmings.

Have you tried our quality range of Gloucester Old Spot pork, home bred lamb and locally reared Red Poll beef? We also have succulent home cooked ham, pies, bacon, sausages of all types and a wide range of ready to cook meals.



The Meat Joint, Iron Down Farm, Deddington, Oxon OX15 0PJ
Tel: 01869 338115 Email: mail@themeatjoint.co.uk
www.themeatjoint.co.uk



A CUT ABOVE THE REST





Follow on with a board covered in your favourite cheese selection - perfect to finish off the rest of the wine!

GOOD OLD FASHIONED BAKED RICE PUDDING

Serves 4 to 6

Just a few simple ingredients will create this warm and comforting traditional pudding to enjoy on a cold winter's night.

What you'll need:

2 pints full fat milk
140g pudding rice
110g caster sugar
A big knob of butter
A good sprinkling of ground nutmeg

What to do:

Preheat the oven to 140°C. Butter a large ovenproof dish.

Bring the milk to a simmer in a saucepan. Stir in the rice and sugar. Pour the milk and rice mixture into the ovenproof dish. Top with the knob of butter and sprinkle with plenty of nutmeg.



Bake in the preheated oven for about 2 hours. Stir the pudding halfway through baking, then let it continue to cook to form a nice crisp skin on top.

Baked rice pudding with a nutty twist:

Make a pistachio and coconut variation - replace a quarter of the milk with coconut milk and adding a couple of tablespoons of sweetened, flaked coconut, and a teaspoon of saffron before baking. When it's ready to serve, scatter a handful of toasted pistachio nuts over the top. It's rather good!



Come and celebrate Christmas at The Horse & Groom, Milcombe with our lovely festive menu

Starters

Roasted Red Pepper and Tomato Soup, Garlic Croutons, Basil Pesto Dressing, Crusty Bread (v)

Chicken Liver Pate, Home-made Pickles, Toasted Sourdough

Prawn, Avocado and Cherry Tomato Cocktail with Marie Rose Sauce, Brown Bloomer Bread

Baked Goats Cheese in Walnut Crust, Balsamic Onions and Salad Leaves (v)

Mains

Butter Roasted Turkey Breast, Pig in Blanket, Stuffing, Roast Potatoes & Rich Port Gravy

Normandy Pork, Apple and Cider Casserole with Baby Potatoes

Cornish Fish Pie (Cod, Smoked Haddock, Prawns) with a Creamy Mashed Potato Lid

Mushroom, Onion and Thyme Puff Pastry Tart with Roast Potatoes (v)

All Main Courses served with Seasonal Vegetables

Puds

Rich Christmas Pudding, Salted Caramel Brandy Butter

Chocolate Brownie, Chantilly Cream (Gluten Free)

Baileys Irish Cream Panna Cotta, Espresso Syrup, Almond Biscuits

Local Cheese Plate, Crackers, Home-made Chutney

2/3 Course Lunch @ £17 / £23 (includes party crackers)

2/3 Course Dinner @ £19 / £25 (includes party crackers)

SPECIAL OFFER FOR FOUR SHIRES READERS
Free Glass of Prosecco for all your guests when you book a Christmas Party meal. Just mention 'Four Shires offer' when booking.

The Horse and Groom Inn
Milcombe nr Banbury, Oxon OX15 4RS
01295 722142

horseandgroominn@gmail.com
www.thehorseandgroominn.co.uk

Steve

Betts

2 Church Lane . Banbury . Oxon . OX16 5LR

Tel: 01295 262387 . Fax: 01295 262387

www.stevebettsbutchers.co.uk



Family Butchers

Pleased to meet you!

...and meat to please you!

CHRISTMAS OFFERS!

XMAS POULTRY



XMAS HAMPER

5 lbs Boneless Turkey Crown and
3lbs Topside Beef
3 lbs Gammon Joint
3 lb Loin Pork Roast
1 lb Back Bacon
1 lb Pork Sausage Meat

£69.00

PACKED IN
BETTS
BUTCHERS
CHILLED
BAG

Barn-Reared Turkey

£3.99 per lb

Free Range Bronze Turkey **£5.99 per lb**



Peachcroft Farm

Free Range Geese

£5.99 per lb

Creedy Carver Free Range Duckling

£2.99 per lb



Tom Copas Organic Turkeys

£7.49 per lb

Creedy Carver Free Range Cockerel

£3.29 per lb

British boneless Turkey Breast

£4.09 per lb

DELUXE HAMPER

14 lbs Fresh Turkey or

6 lbs Boneless Turkey Crown

4 lbs Topside Beef Roast

4 lbs Gammon Joint

4 lbs Loin of Pork Roast

1 lb Back Bacon

1 lb Pork Sausage Meat

2 lb Pork Pie

£85.00

ORDERS
NOW
BEING
TAKEN

01295 262387

2 Church Lane, Banbury OX16 5LR



wine OF THE month

A great value full flavour wine that is a perfect accompaniment for comforting food during wintery evenings.

CHÂTEAU TOUR BLANCHE MEDOC CRU BOURGEOIS 2012



Chateau Tour Blanche is situated in the commune of Saint Christoly du Médoc. Well-crafted, this classic-styled Bordeaux red is made from a highly quaffable blend of 76% Merlot, 21% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% Cabernet Franc. Aging for 16 months in French oak barrels

gives this lovely wine a deep, mature nose with raspberry and spicy vanilla notes. This cru bourgeois is relatively complex with slightly earthy notes balanced by attractive, silky and fresh fruit flavours. The structure is moderately tannic with plenty of ripe fruit and a lingering finish.

Food pairings include Steak entrecôte marchand de vin (red-wine sauce and shallots,) grass-fed Wagyu rib-eye fillet and roast leg of lamb with rosemary and garlic. ABV: 14%.

At SH Jones Wines £11.99. Six bottle case discount at £10.79 per bottle.

DIARY DATES:

Friday 11th November, 7pm-9pm: Port Tasting at SH Jones Wines, The Cellar Shop, 2 Riverside, Tramway Estate, Banbury OX16 5TU.

Contact Gavin or Freddie on 01295 672296 for tickets, or email: retail@shjones.com. To keep in touch with SH Jones Wines events: www.shjones.com/shjones/events

W

WILD VIEW EVENTS

Wild View Events is a bespoke catering and event management company. Drawing on over 15 years of experience we work with our clients to provide a truly personal service.

With our catering, event management and front of house experience we can cater for any Wedding or party as well as corporate hospitality, balls, family events and wakes.



Please give one of our friendly team a call on 01295 758898.

photography by darren bedding photography



THE SHEEP

words: caroline jaques

Stow-on-the-Wold

WHERE WE WENT

The Sheep on Sheep Street, in the heart of the beautiful Cotswolds town, Stow-on-the-Wold.

STAYING AT THE SHEEP

Newly updated, The Sheep revealed its new look only four months ago and offers a warm welcome with friendly staff, sumptuous decor and big cozy armchairs. There are 22 well appointed rooms - a night here starts at £90. We were shown two of the rooms, both wonderfully warm, a superior room (£130) and a premium room (£150) - we loved the premium room with French doors opening onto its own patio garden, the biggest bed you can imagine, masses of space and a beautiful bathroom. But the superior room was just as lovely and we would have been very content to stay in here also - plenty



of space, a super bathroom and, as with all the rooms, a Nespresso coffee machine and kettle with a selection of Birchall tea, as well as still and sparkling water.

There could not be a nicer place to come back to than The Sheep's cosy bar after a day wandering around this very pretty town. Laden with shopping bags (I defy you to return empty handed!), you can sink into a pile of cushions on a squashy armchair, or perch on a barstool and enjoy a cocktail or two, or a bottled craft beer, or one of the ten speciality gins, before drifting into the restaurant for a delicious meal. It's relaxed and unstuffy, and nothing has been neglected. The full length bar is

tiled with stunning ceramic tiles in deep continental blues, the restaurant is tasteful with an open plan, London brasserie feel, with bare wooden tables, comfortable upholstered chairs in subdued colours, lots of cushions and well considered lighting.

IN THE RESTAURANT

The most important thing for me the moment I sit down to a meal is to be offered drinks - it is so often forgotten, leaving diners feeling increasingly irritated and unloved, with empty glasses and no attention for a long time. Not so at The Sheep, they get this exactly right - drinks were offered straight away and we were then able





to mull over the choices on the extensive menu whilst enjoying our first glass and watching the smartly dressed chefs preparing pizza behind the bar. Perfect.

THE MENU

Nibbles start at £4 each, or three for £11 and include unusual combinations such as sautéed edamame beans in their pods with soy and sesame or fried pickles with blue cheese dip. Starters include bruschetta and slow roasted tomatoes with garlic & chilli oil (£4) and Gambas Pil Pil with Bloody Mary mayonnaise (£6).

To follow, there are three super sounding salads (all £7.95), a fantastic pizza menu (all well under £10), a grill menu including steak, chicken, lamb and even lobster, and a fabulous selection of large plates (up to £18).

The rather gorgeous dessert menu features chocolate, marshmallow and strawberry pizzetta, or oven fried plums with granola, whipped vanilla yogurt and Cotswold honey.



WHAT WE ATE

We opted for a mix of small plates to start. There were halloumi chips with jalapeno ketchup; salt and pepper squid with aioli; prawn spring rolls with sweet chilli; and Thai fishcakes with Asian slaw and Vietnamese dipping sauce. I would be hard pushed to select a favourite as they were all quite delicious. The halloumi chips were light, almost frothy, and the jalapeno ketchup had a kick that cut right across the richness of the cheese. The prawn spring rolls were full of succulent prawns in a lighter-than-light filo pastry, served with the sweetest of sweet chilli sauce. The batter on the salt and pepper squid was sheer perfection and the Thai

fishcakes were so light they were like devouring spicy air, with Asian slaw that was fresh and aromatic.

If I were eating at home, I'd have stopped there, pleasantly satisfied, with perhaps enough room for a few mouthfuls of this or that. But the main courses looked so delicious we were 'forced' to soldier on!

Disappointingly, the lamb (first choice for my significant other) was unavailable - but this provided two excellent alternatives - I promised roast lamb for Sunday lunch (eagerly accepted), and it encouraged his tastebuds to indulge in the Sichuan style pork belly with leeks, chillies and peanut dressed rice noodles. This could possibly be the best thing on the menu and I was tempted to steal a forkful every time he took his eyes off the plate! The noodles were beautifully fragrant and Barry commented that he could have eaten a whole bowl of them on their own - so if you prefer a vegetarian diet this would be an excellent choice. Happily though, they came with rich and melting pork belly, cooked Sichuan style, hot and spicy and coated with just the right amount of sauce. If only I could have somehow acquired an extra stomach I would

have ordered another portion to gobble up after my own main course!

I chose the Todenham Farm sirloin steak which comes simply prepared with

garlic butter, roasted vine tomatoes and fries. You can tell a lot about a kitchen by the quality of their steaks and, with only garlic butter alongside it, there was nothing for it to hide behind. I was delighted to find it perfectly cooked.

My dessert was a caramel and macadamia baked cheesecake with pomegranate ice cream. Oh Yes! How I loved this delectable combination - not too sweet, just perfectly balanced, creamy ice-cream with a sharp marbling of pomegranate. Our other choice was stilton and fruit cake - a big



slab of each, to be consumed a square of each at a time with a strong espresso coffee and perhaps a glass of port. It's unusual, but with just enough sweet and salt, and just enough texture and creaminess, this is an amazing combination.

WHAT WE DRANK

It was chilly, yet sunny outside so a nice, chewy red wine was definitely the order of the day. We drank a bottle of Le Sanglier De La Montagne Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve 2015, heralding from the sunny hills of the south of France. It was rich and fruity with hints of spice and a perfect partner for our meal. There was water as well, but the less said about that the better!

OUR VERDICT

The Sheep is a friendly, smart, welcoming place to be enjoyed for drinks, dining, or both. If you can, it is worth stay the night as well. The service is excellent and the Sichuan style pork belly dish warrants a visit in its own right. Highly recommended.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF... *Chris White*

Four Shires' photo journalist Liz Drake, posed some hard hitting questions to Chris White, conservative MP for Warwick and Leamington. This is what he had to say...

You were elected in May 2010 as the Conservative M.P. for Warwick and Leamington, winning the seat with a majority of just over 3,000, with a swing from Labour to Conservative of 8%.

This success followed your defeat at the 2005 General Election in which you narrowly lost the Warwick and Leamington seat by just 266 votes.

Was it particularly cruel to lose by such a small margin?

"No, it wasn't particularly cruel – having been selected and having just moved to Warwick in 2002, I was pleased with what we had achieved.

In less than three years we'd secured such a close result. I had a great team and gained support from across the constituency. After the count, everyone said "you were so close" and I remember walking up and down my garden and thinking "we can win here" and in 2010 I was delighted to be elected as the Member of Parliament for Warwick and Leamington.

Now, having been re-elected in 2015, I am honoured to be able to continue to serve this wonderful constituency. It is a truly great place to live and work – for instance, we're sat here watching the buzz of the Food and Drink Festival which has become a firm favourite and much anticipated event in Leamington."

words and
pictures:
liz drake



at the Houses of Parliament (left), and with Will, Chris's assistant at Chris's Westminster Office (above)

a busy morning at Sallisford
Canal Trust Open Day



In your maiden speech to the House in June 2010, you describe the constituency as "an oasis of opportunity". You are now in your 6th year as the MP for Warwick and Leamington, having been re-elected with an increased majority in May 2015.

Do you still regard the constituency as an "oasis of opportunity"?

"Of course. I also said in my maiden speech that with the constituency's demography and geography, being at the centre of the country, the opportunity for jobs, apprentices, business, creative industries, video games industry, manufacturing, technology industries, is second to none and I believe that such opportunities continue to grow. Coupled with excellent schools and universities on our doorstep and as a centre for research for the automotive industry - there is a great deal going on. But obviously, I am conscious that there is always still more to do.

A current example of opportunity is the beginning of works just this week on the site of the former Ford Foundry in Leamington, which sadly closed in 2007 with the loss of hundreds of jobs. Vitsoe, both

a manufacturer and an exporter, is moving into Leamington, and will I am sure, become part of the fabric of the town's business and manufacturing community. The new building will become an iconic landmark, not least through being located on one of the main access routes.

The constituency also plays a crucial role in the 'Midlands Engine', and I am keen to help shape industrial strategy and manufacturing policy on a regional and national basis. Warwick and Leamington's well established industrial heritage is very much part of the UK's future - you only have to see the number of people driving Land Rovers and Jaguars to see what an important contribution such businesses makes to our economy and employment locally. I am proud that we are part of the Midlands Engine, the Midlands supply chain and that we make a significant contribution to the wider national economy."

a warm day at
Portcullis House



Your constituency is home to a great mix of nationally important manufacturing, industrial, agricultural, technological, green and creative industries. Set within a beautiful urban and rural landscape, often oozing history and elegant charm, it could be said you reflect well the constituency you serve.

I wonder which has had more influence - has Warwick and Leamington shaped you; or you have shaped Warwick and Leamington?

"It is important that any M.P. reflects the values and interests of their constituents.

I relate to the creative nature of our towns; I enjoy our many outstanding parks, being involved ►



with businesses and supporting many of our local charities, both big and small. My Private Member's Bill in the previous Parliament, which became the Social Value Act, has the potential to make a real difference to the third sector, and helps to foster a strong sense of a community that we can all feel pride in and be an active part of."

As a public servant, you are the elected voice of your constituents in the House of Commons. Do you hold regular weekly surgeries with your constituents and do their concerns and worries shape how you think on an issue?

"Yes, the most important part of the role of an M.P. is to respond to individual constituents' concerns and try and address these. This is always at the forefront of my mind, and whilst I can't solve every problem brought to me in a surgery, I will always try my best.

I am interested to hear peoples' opinions and views, and make myself as accessible as possible because this is how I get to hear about local concerns. With a high level of accessibility, I want constituents to feel able to bring the issues that matter to them, to my attention. By being involved and attending a wide range of events, holding surgeries, meetings and supporting community groups, I am better able to identify the issues that impact on people's lives.

Have you ever rebelled against the Government and were you comfortable with the possible implications of this?

"Yes, I have voted against the Government on a number of occasions, most recently on HS2. Due to the impact on the constituency and the projected high costs involved, I do not believe it is the most cost-effective solution to improving the country's infrastructure and I believe that alternative ways of improving our transport links should be investigated.

An M.P. does not take a decision to vote against the Government lightly, and whilst we are elected to Parliament to represent the views of our constituents, M.P.'s have to regularly make judgements as to what is best for their constituents and constituency."

Has anything surprised you about being the MP for Warwick and Leamington?

"The characteristics of our local area in terms of our local economy and the level of engagement with the political process amongst local residents is unsurprising, but the aspect of the role that took me aback the most was during the first few weeks after the election in 2010 and some of the more ancient practices of Parliament. I greatly respect the rich traditions of our democracy and the history of the House of Commons, but have to say that I was surprised to find hooks designed for swords in the cloakroom!"





Have your priorities changed at all since becoming an MP six and a half years ago?

"I try and do a great deal in the community and very much enjoy being involved with many projects. I am always looking for new challenges and opportunities for our community. However the limiting factor is being able to fit them all in. Responding to constituency issues, my Select Committee work and playing an active role locally, dealing with everything in an efficient way, means that my team and I are always very busy. Having a great level of support does mean I am able to work with new projects and see broader issues, both locally and nationally."

What advice would you give to anyone thinking about becoming involved in politics?

"Play an active role in your community. Involve yourself in your local school, talk to people, talk to your neighbours, enjoy being with and meeting people. I think the most important advice I could give however is be prepared to stand up for what you believe in."

Recently, Victoria Beckham published a letter written to her 18 year old self. What would you write in a letter to your 18 year old self?

"At some point in your life you may find yourself becoming interested in becoming an M.P. This may take you a long time, but when you are finally elected, you will know that all the hard work has been worthwhile because there is to me, no more rewarding and satisfying job than being able to represent your local area at Westminster."

May I ask what's next for Chris White MP, and are you planning to stand in the 2020 General Election?

"To continue to work hard for all the people who live in Warwick and Leamington, and to do this to the best of my ability; new projects, new challenges, new ideas, all the time trying to make a positive difference."

2020 is in the distant future in terms of my priorities but as it stands, I hope to have the privilege of being able to continue the wide range of projects I am involved in representing our strong local community in parliament."

1: Elizabeth Tower at Houses of Parliament; 2: Q&A at The Chamber, Leamington Spa; 3: Chris speaking at the opening of Myton Church at the Westbury Centre, Leamington Spa; 4: congratulating all at Althorpe Gallery and Studios, Leamington Spa; 5: Chris with the winning painting 'Allotments' by Phillippa Powell at Althorpe Studios and Gallery; 6: on the Terrace of the Houses of Parliament; 7: Saltisford Canal Centre; 8: Little Radford Model Boat Club members and Chris; 9: visiting Warwick Kitchen's stand at Leamington Food Festival with Abbey Wiggins and Susie; 10: Pearl Pawson and Chris White MP at Myton Church launch, Westbury Centre, Leamington Spa; 11: on board - approaching Salisford; 12: addressing the audience at Guide Dogs 75th Birthday celebrations





film still from *Vertigo* with Jaguar and Kim Novak at Fort Point beneath the Golden Gate Bridge, and (inset) Jaguar by the oyster farms at Tomales Bay

a ROAD TRIP with MR HITCHCOCK

words: bruce cox

Legendary director, Alfred Hitchcock, was famous for sneaking himself into scenes during his movies. And he's not the only one. Carefully watch episodes of the *Inspector Morse* TV series, for example, and Colin Dexter, the author and the creator of the Morse character, will always pop up at some point. It's a hard temptation to resist if you have the opportunity and I have to admit that I wasn't averse to doing it myself during the period of my career when I was producing TV documentaries!

Something else that Mr H. and I have in common (apart from, shall we say, our somewhat 'stout' build) is a love of San Francisco and its surrounding area, both falling for its charms when we worked in the area.

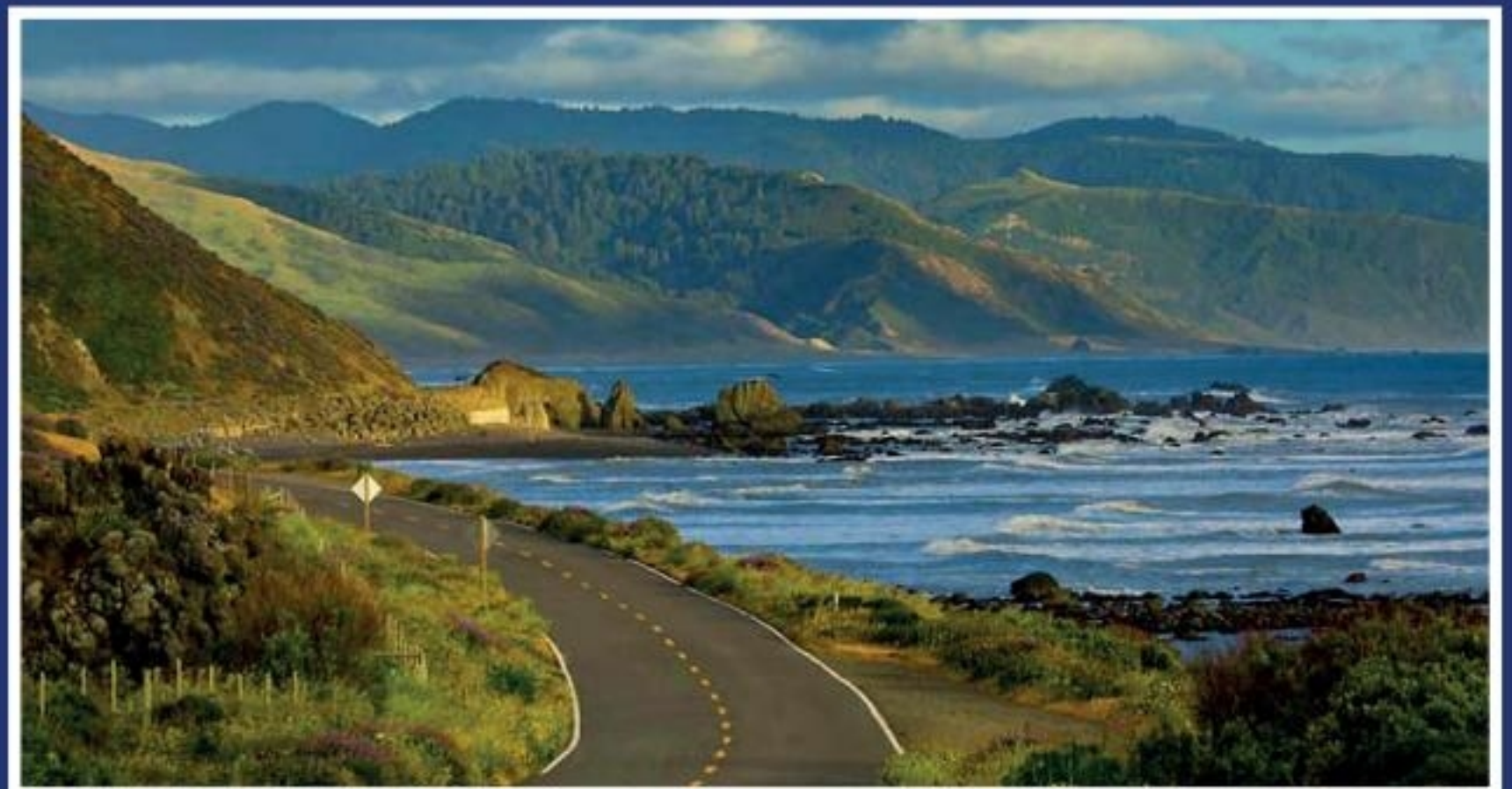
Hitchcock became enamoured of the region when filming the Daphne du Maurier drama *Rebecca* in Monterey County south of the city in 1939, and he bought a ranch and vineyard in that area the following year. From that point on he set more than half a dozen films in the San Francisco Bay Area with two

of the most famous being *Vertigo* and *The Birds* – the latter of which was another re-located version of du Maurier's originally Cornwall-set thrillers.

Another area in which our tastes coincide is an appreciation of British cars of high performance and quality and several such motors appear in his films. In *Vertigo*, for example, the main female character (played by Kim Novak) drives a Jaguar Mark VIII and the most remembered scene in which she and the car appear

together is when she drives it out to Fort Point under the shadow of the iconic Golden Gate Bridge and attempts suicide by jumping into the swirling waters of the bay. She is rescued by her male co-star, James Stewart and the film carries on to its typically Hitchcockian climax.

Vertigo has been voted by critics as one of the best-structured films of all time but perhaps even more iconic is *The Birds*, which Hitchcock filmed in San Francisco and at Bodega Bay, 70 miles to the north





on the spectacular Pacific Coast. So when I had the use of a Jaguar XF sports saloon for a few days in the SFO area, what better way to enjoy it than by taking a trip on the Hitchcock trail between these two locations. Especially as it involved a drive up the winding coast over the Golden Gate bridge and through the wonderful landscapes of Marin and Sonoma counties on California's Highway One.

My base in San Francisco was one with a strong Hitchcock connection, as the name implies. Back in the 1950s when it was the Empire Hotel, the current Hotel Vertigo (www.haiyi-hotels) in the upscale Nob Hill district was one of the locations for the shooting of the film. Now, having taken advantage of that with the name change and a complete refurbishment with a 'fifties moderne' period look, it is my recommended choice for a stylish yet reasonably priced option as one of the city's small 'boutique hotels'.

Heading out on the 101 Freeway over the Golden Gate, the 'scenic route' to Bodega Bay takes off to the west on the coastal Highway One. This winding road first skirts the flanks of Mount Tamalpais that dominates the skyline north of San Francisco and then drops down to Muir Beach. Like the nearby Muir Woods, this small town is named after John Muir, the Scottish naturalist who settled in California and did so much to both publicise yet still protect the natural wonders of his adopted home.

From there the road follows the contours of the hills that spill down into the Pacific. It is through countryside reminiscent of my old home in the Isle of Man and traffic is light – so no wonder it is a favourite with local motorcyclists!

Clicking the Jaguar's transmission setting into 'sport' mode allowed me to enjoy it as the bikers do before dropping down to sea level once again at Stinson Beach to ►

below left: the Pacific coastline near Bodega Bay

this page: Bodega church featured in The Birds



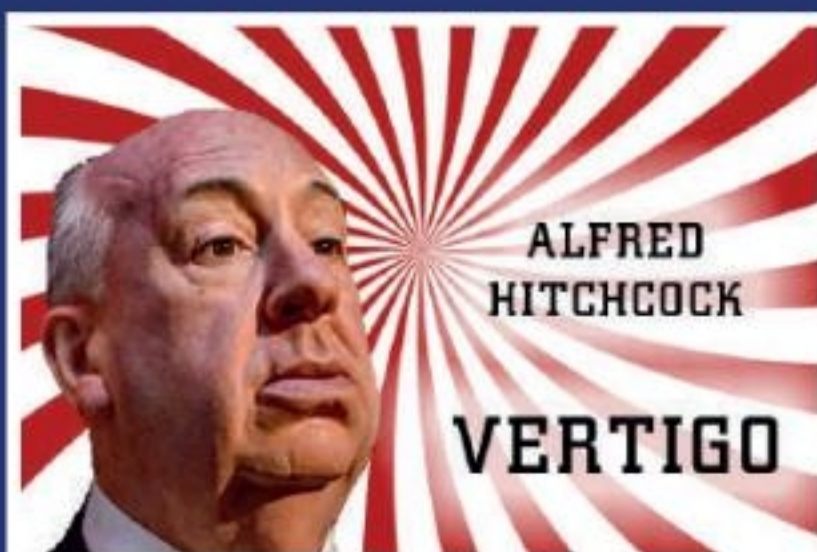


cruise along the shore of Bolinas Lagoon, an estuary into which small rivers drain from the surrounding hills.

After that the road runs through serene pasturelands and little villages that time seems to have forgotten. And the locals obviously like it that way as the California Highway Department is apparently always replacing signposts destroyed by residents who want to keep their own little piece of paradise to themselves! With the Jaguar rolling along smoothly and quietly in 'cruise' mode I slipped through the little villages of Olema and Point Reyes Station without annoying anyone before stopping on the side of Tomales Bay for a lunch including oysters freshly harvested from their beds in the bay that very morning.



From there, there is only about twenty miles to go before Bodega Bay – most of it along the Tomales bayside, dipping up and down and around through groves of eucalyptus trees with the Jag back in 'sport' mode. Then out through more dairy-land pastures and fruit orchards until cutting back to the coast at Bodega, passing on the way the white-painted wooden church that featured so prominently in Mr Hitchcock's movie. This is the route driven by the heroine of *The Birds* (Tippi Hedren) on her way to a weekend rendezvous with a new boyfriend that, for all the wrong reasons, she would never forget! Tippi made the drive in an



Jaguar at Hotel Vertigo, San Francisco

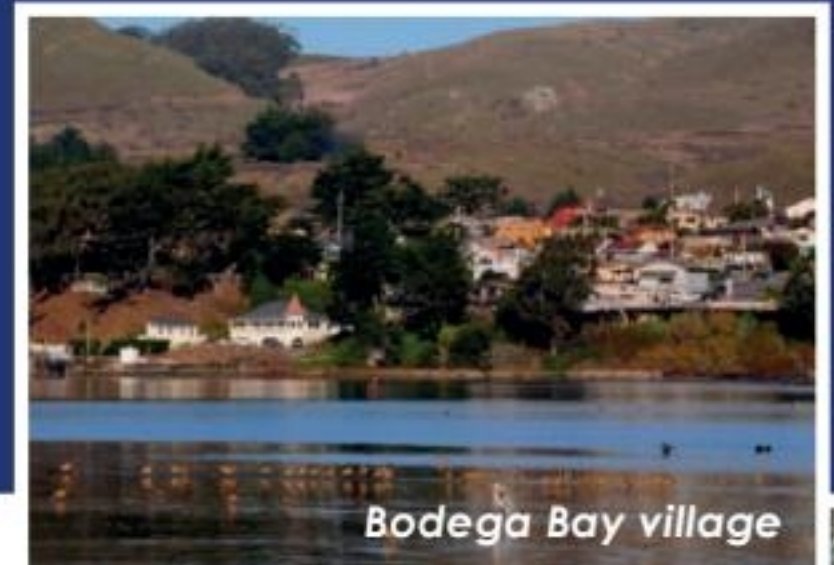
Aston Martin DB2/4 convertible and although the Jaguar XF might not have been quite such a classic, it still looked more than classy enough as I rolled into the parking lot of my lodgings for the night, the equally classy Bodega Bay Lodge (www.bodegabaylodge.com).

All in all, this trip had taken four hours or so, including the leisurely lunch and that easy-going mood continued as I watched the sun go down over the bay (and over the rim of a big glass of California cabernet sauvignon) from the hotel terrace before feasting on a dinner of fish that had only been landed at Bodega's Tides Wharf that morning.

Next day there was an easy drive of less than an hour and a half back to San Francisco by making the short hop inland to the 101 Freeway and putting the Jaguar into 70mph cruise control so as to avoid the attention of the California Highway patrol. So was completed a couple of days in one of my favourite parts of the world and in one of the most impressive cars I have driven in a long time. It just couldn't have got any better.

left: poster for The Birds and Vertigo

right: Jaguar dwarfed by a hillside grove of eucalyptus trees



Bodega Bay village





STROKE OF GENIUS

It is never too late to start a new hobby. Art has long been seen as therapeutic and a way of expressing feelings. We are lucky in the *Four Shires* that we have some great classes right on our door step. *Four Shires'* very own Barry Whitehouse runs numerous weekly workshops which cater for every level of ability. Classes are as follows;

Art classes at The Artery, 21 Parsons Street:

- Monday evenings - watercolours 7-9pm (weekly).
- Tuesday - acrylics 2-4pm (fortnightly).
- Wednesday - drawing 2-4pm (fortnightly).
- Thursday - watercolours 2-4:30pm (weekly).
- Friday - watercolours 1:30-4pm (weekly)
- First Saturday of the month - free art demonstration 11-11:45am.
- Second Sunday of the month apart from November when it is the third Sunday, watercolours 10:30am-1pm.

The Artery also runs two regular art classes in surrounding villages:

- Great Bourton Art Group on Mondays, 10am-1pm at the village hall.
- Farthinghoe Art Group at the Parish rooms, Middleton Cheney, Thursdays 10am-1pm.

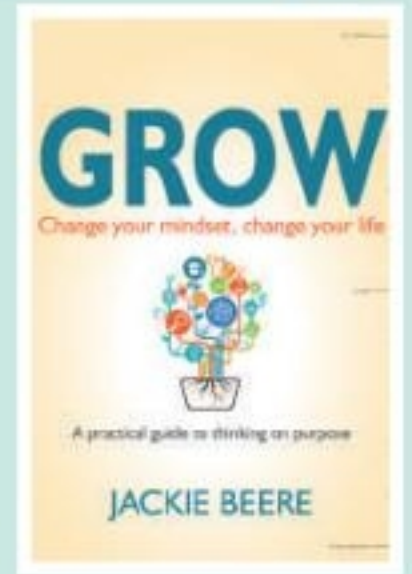
GROW: CHANGE YOUR MINDSET, CHANGE YOUR LIFE

With children in England ranking the lowest for self-confidence and coming 14th out of 15 countries when it comes to life satisfaction, it seems that something needs to be done to turn this around.

According to new book **GROW**, by Jackie Beere, a Northamptonshire parent and former head teacher, the answer lies in helping young people develop emotional intelligence through 'Thinking on Purpose', facilitating easier learning and greater resilience. Jackie was awarded an OBE for her work developing student and teacher learning programmes in both primary and secondary schools.

Schools are increasingly under pressure to focus on teaching knowledge and improving examination results. This can mean that the child's self-belief, adaptability and empathy can fall by the wayside.

The new book provides tips for parents to help young people better understand themselves and others, in order to improve confidence and flexibility.



Bloxham School

Co-educational Boarding and Day School for ages 11-18

Inspiring ambition

Applications now being taken for 11+ entrance exam and 11+/13+ scholarship awards.

Scholarships may be combined with a Bursary



Please contact Admissions for more information on
01295 724301 or email admissions@bloxhamschool.com

NEW DAY HOUSE
Opens in
September
2017

Sibford School



Day pupils from
age 3 ~ 18
Full and weekly
boarding from age 11

near Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 5QL

Whole School Open Morning

from 9.45am **Monday 14 November**



Come and discover the many opportunities that Sibford School offers for pupils aged from 3 ~ 18

for further details visit the website

www.sibfordschool.co.uk

or call 01295 781203



SPORTY START TO NEW SCHOOL YEAR

It's been a sporty half-term for pupils at Sibford School near Banbury.

International hockey player, Chris Cargo, a member of Team Ireland Men's Hockey Squad for the Rio Olympics, visited the school to share some coaching tips.

PE Teacher, Allison Warrillow, said: "It was a fabulous day and the girls picked up some really expert advice. To have a visit from an Olympic athlete so soon after the Rio games was a great coup and we were really grateful to Chris for spending the day with us."

Two weeks later, former world BMX champion, Mike Mullen, visited Sibford to run a series of BMX workshops for pupils in Years 7 and 8.



from top: Chris Cargo at Sibford; Mike Mullen with pupils



Cheney Travel

**A modern first class reliable service for
all your coaching needs**



14 – 70 seat coaches available



Tel: 01295 254254 Thorpe Mead, Banbury, OX16 4RZ
www.cheneycoaches.co.uk travel@cheneycoaches.co.uk

A-LEVEL HISTORY OF ART WILL BE NO MORE

History of art will no longer be a choice for those studying for A- Levels as the last exam board to offer it at this level have decided to remove it from the curriculum.

Exam board AQA has described the decision as difficult. In a letter to teachers, the board said it was struggling to recruit sufficient experienced examiners to mark and award specialist topics.

Students taking the current course will be unaffected and will be able to take their AS-level exams in 2017 and A-level exams in 2018. This news means however that once that course is phased out under government rules, they will be the last to take history of art as an A-level.



NURSERY AND RECEPTION PLACES AVAILABLE

St John's Priory School is a small and friendly day prep school for boys and girls aged 3 – 11 years, situated in the heart of Banbury. It is easily accessible from the M40 motorway; Brackley, Bicester, Oxford, Daventry and nearby villages, and offers a tradition of academic excellence through a vibrant all round education.

At St John's Priory, we believe your child's experience of school plays an important role in their lives and determines their academic, social and, probably, their occupational future. From the outset, your child's interests and aptitudes are encouraged, nurtured and built upon; instilling in them a love of learning and offering a 'bespoke'



approach to their education.

Children at St John's Priory School enjoy a very happy start to their education. Happy children learn and love to learn. Our dedicated teachers inspire and nurture the children, helping to ensure that they become well-rounded, well-mannered and confident young people. Children are taught in cheerful, bright classrooms with excellent resources and also enjoy weekly Forest School sessions.

At St John's Priory, our 'Family First' approach ensures not only that your child feels secure and happy within our friendly environment but also that our families are supported and guided in a generous and sensitive manner. Our flexible wrap around care at the start and the end of the school day offer great value, in an environment our children feel is a 'home from home.' Every step of the way, from admission to senior school



transition, we are on hand to support and to care about each of our children and their families.

Starting school can be daunting. With its new environment and new routines, the process can be worrying for your child and also for you. At St John's Priory we offer 'settling in sessions' and are flexible enough to meet the needs of each child as they join our Early Years department.

"Our children really feel at home at SJP. I can say goodbye in the morning and relax, knowing that they will be happy and safe all day." Current Parent.

ADVERTISING FEATURE

St John's Priory School
'Traditional Excellence'



Day school for boys and girls aged 3 – 11 years

NURSERY & RECEPTION PLACES



Small class sizes

Nurturing environment

Bespoke learning opportunities

Organic school lunches

Wrap around care 8am – 6pm

Contact us for more information:

Tel: 01295 259607

www.stjohnspriory.co.uk

Come & visit us by
private
appointment.

St John's Priory School, St John's Road, Banbury, Oxon, OX16 5HX



BANBURY COMPANIES ON THE MOVE WITH JAMIE BRIGGS

A busy summer for **Jamie Briggs Removals & Storage** has culminated in prestigious contracts with three major Banbury firms.

The company, which is based at Upper Heyford,

was chosen by **Norbar Torque Tools**, **Banbury Postiche** and **Kärcher UK** to carry out their removals

Norbar, one of the world's largest specialists in the field of torque tools, recently relocated to purpose built new premises in Wildmere Road.

Catherine Rohll, Commercial Director at Norbar, commented **"We were delighted that we chose Jamie Briggs to help us with moving our offices from Beaumont Road to our newly refurbished premises on Wildmere Road. Jamie and his team were helpful, adaptable and always willing to go the extra mile to make sure that the move went as smoothly as possible."**



This contract was closely followed by the move of Banbury Postiche to Apollo Park, Wroxton and Kärcher, a family-owned global leader in cleaning technology, which employs over 11,000 staff worldwide.

The Kärcher move involved a bespoke package to relocate their UK head office workforce of 125, plus IT equipment and canteen facilities from Beaumont Road to their iconic new premises in Brookhill Way.

Managing Director, Jamie Briggs, commented, **"We were delighted that three leading, local companies entrusted major relocation projects to us and I would like to thank all my staff for their dedication and hard work. As a Banburian, it is extremely gratifying that not only have these employers chosen to remain in the area but have also used a local supplier, reinforcing the many values and advantages of this region".**



For advice on investment & pension planning, talk to Swann Financial

SWANN
FINANCIAL CONSULTANCY

01295 275269
www.swannfinancial.co.uk

Swann Financial Consultancy represents only St. James's Place Wealth Management plc (which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority) for the purpose of advising solely on the Group's wealth management products and services, more details of which are set out on the Group's website www.sjp.co.uk/products.





The sun shined brightly for almost 180 guests who attended the annual Owners Day at Ben Case Racing.

A dual-purpose trainer, Ben and his dedicated team are based at Wardington Gate Farm, on the beautiful Edgcote Estate five miles north of Banbury. This purpose built yard with first class training facilities is centrally located and home to both National Hunt and Flat horses.

Guests enjoyed a parade of over 40 horses in the indoor school which was followed by a marquee lunch.

images by Harry Rhodes, Tudor Photography

Ben Case RACING OWNERS DAY



1: Ben Case, Roger Coy & Nigel Biggs; 2: First Drift held by Codie Aubrey, Ben Case, George Case, Croco Bay, Pulp Fiction, Kielan Woods & Millie Lucock; 3: the parade of horses; 4: Darrel Foulk & Sharon Phillips; 5: Ben Evans, Tom Clemit, Michael Jenkins, Lucy Horan, Mille Lucock, Hannah Henn, George Case, Charlie Case, Adrian Olteanu, Florian Neagoe; 6: Sarah Case & Eddie Gladden, photobombed by Ben Case; 7: Tracey Leibling and Katherine Lewis; 8: Richard & Judith Bray; 9: Andrea Gladden, John Moorhouse & Connie Robinson; 10: Guinness enjoying a large bone!; 11: Bridget Joice, Cliff Nixey & Carole Wallace; 12: Helen Loggin & Penny Bonner; 13: the younger generation!; 14: Ben & Sarah Case



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE OLD DAIRY FARM

The Old Dairy Farm Craft Centre, near Weedon Bec, celebrated its 30th birthday last month. Owner Helen Brodie enjoyed a Scottish piping performance from local piper John Anderson. There were candle making demonstrations with Kim Baughan and stone working with Nicholas Morton.

The centre has been featured on TV and in the press with Charlie Ross of 'Flog it' having made a visit just recently.

Helen said: ***"We were one of the first farms to diversify back in 1986 – part of the centre is still a working farm."***





BUY TO LET PROPERTIES

Landlords letting residential property are facing a reduction in their rental profits as higher rate tax relief will be restricted on the costs of finance, such as mortgage interest, from 6 April 2017 onwards.

The extra tax paid might be greater than profits leaving landlords with a rental loss and a cash shortfall. This will only affect individuals as companies owning buy-to-let property will be excluded. The rules do not apply to land and property dealing, development, commercial

lettings or furnished holiday lets. The change will be phased in over three years and all finance costs (not just loan interest) will no longer be an allowable expense. There will be a basic rate tax deduction of up to 20% of the finance costs after the rental profits have been taxed.

Finance costs will include mortgage interest, incidental costs of obtaining finance such as fees and commissions, legal expenses for

Ellacotts^{LLP}

Chartered Accountants & Business Advisers

Delivering Solutions

loan agreements or valuation fees for security of a loan. Tenants will be hit the hardest as they are likely to see rent increases over the next few years.

Planning ahead will help determine whether a landlord will become a higher rate taxpayer as a result of the changes and we can advise on potential solutions to reduce your taxable income.

For more information contact Morag Matthews, by email to mmatthews@ellacotts.co.uk or call 01295 250401.

to let



Specialist legal services for you and your business



E enquiries@se-law.co.uk
T 01295 204000
www.se-law.co.uk

spratt endicott
SOLICITORS

BANBURY | BRACKLEY | BICESTER | BUCKINGHAM

Need some direction?

Trust Ellacotts to provide you with a range of tailored services, knowledgeable expertise and strategic ideas to help you and your business thrive.



For a free initial consultation
Tel: 01295 250401
Email: mail@ellacotts.co.uk

Ellacotts^{LLP}
Chartered Accountants & Business Advisers
Delivering Solutions

www.ellacotts.co.uk

Planning Team expansion

As part of Fisher German's exciting expansion, Simon Warner has joined the South Central Region. As a fully chartered town planner and member of the Royal Town Planning Institute he has worked in the public, consultancy and development sectors giving him a strong insight into the dynamics of commercial, residential and rural development.

The planning world is a contentious and highly complex one and your reasons for needing our help are likely to be as varied. These are some of the ways Fisher German can help you:

- Provide commercial and specific planning advice from the moment you identify a potential project
- Prepare high quality planning submissions including pre-application submission and planning applications
- Represent your best commercial interests throughout the planning process
- Proactively manage engagement with the local planning authority and other stakeholders
- Compile robust evidence to support the planning case, ranging from five year land supply analysis to EIA screening letters
- Help you to build a high quality team for any project
- Promote your sites to the respective Local Authorities for consideration in their plan preparation.

Planning for the future

Your local Council's Local Plan affects your site, and where you live, work, and shop. All local authorities have to have



Simon Warner

an up to date local plan and you should take every available opportunity to influence what it says. The earlier you get involved the better.

The only way your local planning authority will know about your site and the opportunity is if you tell them! This is the only opportunity for you to try to influence policies, which may affect your future planning applications. Fisher German is extremely experienced at producing such representations, to promote your site, shape policies.

Planning for now

Fisher German is able to provide qualified, professional advice to any size of project and bring added value to your project. We have experience of dealing with all types planning applications and can help guide your project

through the planning process to achieve the best outcome for you.

We offer practical solutions to planning problems and a realistic assessment of whether planning consent is likely to be granted. Our advice on planning and development issues is objective and

independent, and delivered in a personal way that brings an understanding of the process.

Contact Simon Warner to discuss any planning opportunities at simon.warner@fishergerman.co.uk or telephone **07806 877251**.

your local team



- rural consultancy
- property agency
- planning & construction
- renewable energy
- utilities & infrastructure
- HS2 advice
- commercial

contact us on

Banbury 01295 271555

banbury@fishergerman.co.uk

innovative thinking, inspired solutions



www.fishergerman.co.uk

GET NOTICED in the *Four Shires*!
Call Gail or Jeremy on 01295 709 999

DIGEST

F N PILE & SONS
FIR TREE FARM, WARMINGTON
BANBURY OX17 1JL 01295 211790

**GARDEN MACHINERY
SERVICING & REPAIRS**

All makes and models
collection and delivery available
Telephone for details

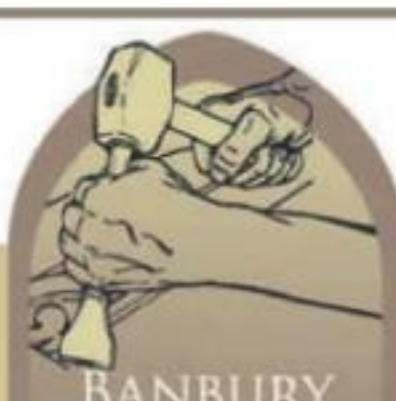
West Bar
VETERINARY HOSPITAL



**NOW OPEN
SATURDAYS
9AM-4PM**

**LATE NIGHT
OPENING
Mon-Thurs until 8PM**

Call our 24 hour line: **01295 262332**
Banbury / North Banbury / Southam / Adderbury / Woodford Halse
www.westbarvets.co.uk



**BANBURY
MEMORIALS**

B.R.A.M.M Registered
Fixer Licensed (BFL)

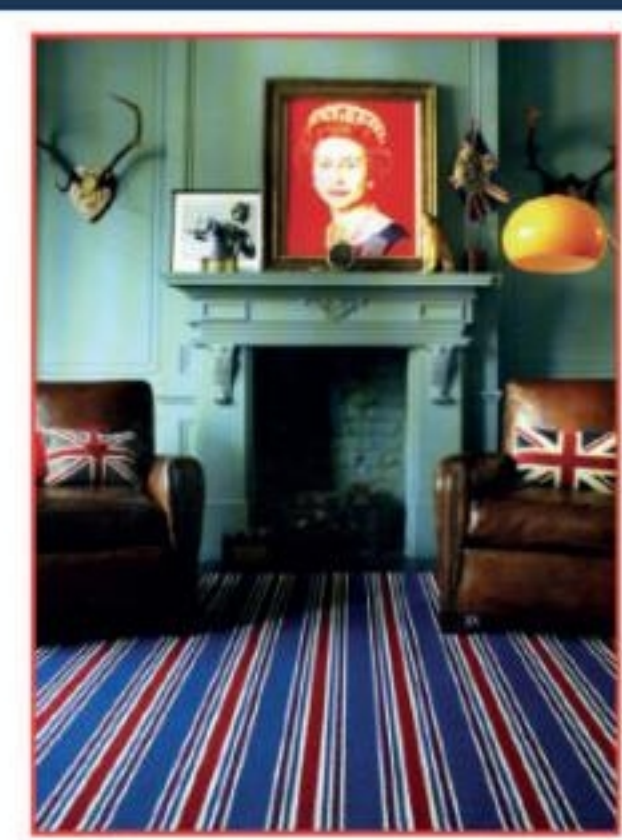
a tradition in stone masonry

Visit our showroom and
workshop or request a
FREE BROCHURE
from our **NEW**
extensive website...

www.banburymemorials.co.uk

Tel: 01295 811669
Fax: 01295 811899

5 Station Yard, Adderbury, Nr. Banbury,
Oxon, OX17 3HJ



www.rayranderson.co.uk

**Ray Randerson
Carpets**

Carpets selected from around the globe on display
at Oxbow Farm, Avon Dassett, CV47 2AQ
01295 690721

DENTISSIM
Dental Laboratory



A professional, fast and friendly
denture repairs service
Pop in for professional advice



5 Church Lane, Banbury
Email: dentissim@live.co.uk
Tel: 07966 006887

**WYNNSTAY Banbury
STORES**

Formerly Banbury Farm & General Supplies Ltd
Banbury Road (B4100), nr Burton Dassett CV47 2BB
Tel: 01295 770707

- Woodshavings & Bed Down
- Horse & Pet Feed
- Horse Electric Fencing
- Minerals & Supplements
- Horse Warmers
- Rubber Stable Matting
- Wheelbarrows
- Post & Rail
- Treated Timber
- Metal & Wooden gates
- Corrugated Roofing Sheets
- Plus much, much more...

Good Quality, Good Value, Good Advice
Delivery Service Available www.wynnstay.co.uk

BLOCKED DRAIN? Call

**BOURTON
DRAIN SERVICES**

ALL TYPES OF BLOCKAGES UNDERTAKEN DOMESTIC RETAIL
COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL

TOILETS • BATHS • SINKS • URINALS • SHOWERS • GULLIES •
DRAINS • GREASE TRAPS

CCTV SURVEYS TANKER SERVICE GULLY EMPTYING HIGH PRESSURE
WATER JETTING SPECIALISTS

GENUINE 24 HOUR 7 DAY SERVICE
APPROVED CONTRACTORS TO SEVERAL LOCAL AUTHORITIES
OVER 25 YEARS EXPERIENCE

PHONE 01295 758303

Overthorpe Beauty

Unwind Relax Recline

Personalised treatments for ladies
including Dermalogica facials, Gelish, manicures,
pedicures and eye treatments.

Refer a friend and receive
10% off a facial treatment,
plus a Dermalogica gift.
(Valid October to December)

Call Jan on 07496 354911
www.overthorpebeauty.co.uk



MARK HUSSEY

The Four Shires'

is blessed with many highly talented musicians it's true, but we suspect that very few can match the talents of classical

guitarist Mark Hussey who has managed to produce an orchestral concerto for guitar from his front room in Banbury.

Musician Mark has spent most of the last six months producing the concerto, although it only took about a month to write.

Mark said: **"I am not classically trained, but the 'Concierto de los sueños' took about a month to create. I was working on this full time however. It took another six months to produce the work including making up the artwork and post production and everything."**

Although Mark gained a degree and PhD in Oxford, he felt that his future lay outside the realms of academia.

"I felt there was so much music in me," he said. **"In my mid 30s I decided to leave my job working in a government funded laboratory to concentrate purely on my guitar playing. I was playing a few gigs here and there at weddings and the like, so during the day I managed to devote up to eight hours practising."**

It was during this time that Mark realised that most mainstream guitar music was focussed around rock, blues, jazz and folk – there was very little classical guitar. He

said: **"I had played with a rock band in France when I first left my day job, I progressed to solo work and have just recently returned from traveling the world performing. More and more people had asked me for a sample of my work and having been inspired by the playing of Paco de Lucia I decided that I would base it around classical flamenco guitar."**

'Concierto de los Suenos' is Mark's wonderful album, adopting the style of Paco de Lucia and using inspiration from his own dreams which he describes as being 'wonderfully vivid'.

The concerto is based around his guitar playing with an orchestral accompaniment 'placed behind it'. This quite modest phrase hides that fact that it took the better part of six months to produce using a mixture of live instruments, samples and skilled studio recording techniques.

Mark said: **"The concerto was pulled together on a number of Apple Mac computers with the help of Go West musician Vinzenz Benjamin and orchestrator Dave Holland."**

We asked Mark what had prompted him to undertake quite such a venture...

"It was a step beyond what most guitarists would undertake and I definitely needed to set myself a challenge; as well as producing an album to best reflect my writing and playing..."

To get hold of a copy of the Banbury produced concerto get in touch with Mark at www.markhussey.com or search on all major download sites.





GROUNDFORCE

FIXED PRICE SERVICING

WWW.TURNEYGROUP.COM



RIDE ON MOWER

(Up to 15hp and excluding Iseki)

Full service including oil, filters, spark plug & fuel/cooling system, check & inspect condition of all belts, bearings & pulleys, check & adjust deck, front wheel alignment & tyres. Clean, lubricate and fully check over machine for correct operation.

£299.00 inc vat



PEDESTRIAN WALK BEHIND MOWER

(Under 21")

Full service including oil, filters, spark plug & fuel/cooling system, check & inspect condition of all belts, bearings & pulleys, check & inspect blade, adjust control cables. Clean, lubricate and fully check over machine for correct operation. Check drive system*

£99.00 inc vat

– Push Mower

£109.00 inc vat

– *Self Propelled



PEDESTRIAN CYLINDER MOWER

(From 14" to 20")

Full service, stripdown and check over. Cylinder removed & regrind, bottom blade grind if possible, set cylinder and check.

£179.00 inc vat

(larger sizes ask for price)



CHAINSAW

Full engine service and retune, blade sharpen and redress bar. Strip, clean, check the machine.

£79.00 inc vat



STRIMMERS/BLOWERS/HEDGE CUTTERS

Full Engine Service and retune, Check, drain and flush carburettor & fuel system. Clean and full check over machine for correct operation.

* Excludes hedgecutter blade sharpening.

£79.00 inc vat



All services include parts, labour, and VAT. Additional parts and labour used to repair pre-existing faults required outside of the fixed price package will be charged once a customer approves this work being undertaken.

We operate a collection and delivery service charged at £24 for walk behind and £48 for ride on models.

Prices valid between 01/11/16 - 30/04/17.

HONDA

Cub Cadet

COUNTAX

Mantis

BRIGGS & STRATTON

LAWNFLITE

DENNIS

Mountfield

RANSOMES JACOBSEN

STIGA

STIHL

ISEKI

VIKING

TORO

WESSEX

Westwood

Masport

BARRUS

HAYTER

BOOK YOUR SERVICE TODAY!

Visit www.turneygroup.com for a full list of packages and prices.

Weston-on-the-Green Bicester Oxfordshire OX25 3TJ

winterservice@turneygroup.com **01869 343292**

PORTFOLIO[®]

OF FINE DIAMONDS



Where your forever begins

EXCLUSIVELY AT



Michael Jones Jeweller

MichaelJonesJeweller.co.uk

#PerfectForever